



chase your dreams
education pays
smart budgeting
how to apply
money for college
invest in yourself

FUND YOUR FUTURE Workbook

GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS, LOANS AND OTHER FINANCIAL AID FOR COLLEGE

2004
2005

CALIFORNIA



Looking ahead to college but need help with the costs? Whether you're bound for a private career college, a community college or a four-year public or independent university, it makes sense to check out financial aid.

Here you'll learn about the major college financial aid programs, their requirements and how to apply for them. You'll also find tips for evaluating offers and managing your money wisely, both during school and after. The key is to start your research early, explore all your options and make sure you meet priority deadlines.

Applying for federal and state aid is free—simply complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, either online or on paper. You can apply during your senior year of high school through your senior year in college—and even beyond, if you're headed for graduate school.

A college education is a smart investment in your future. We're committed to helping you get the education you want and wish you every success.

Diana Fuentes-Michel
Executive Director
California Student Aid Commission

Becky Stilling
President
EdFUND

Everyone should apply for student aid!

If you think you'll need financial aid, apply for it. For more information, see your high school counselor or college financial aid administrator or go to:

■ www.fafsa.ed.gov

FAFSA on the Web, the easiest and fastest way to apply for federal and state aid. You'll also find step-by-step instructions.

■ www.studentaid.ed.gov

The Federal Student Aid Information Center, to learn more about Pell Grants and other federal aid, and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSASM. Or call toll free 800.4FED.AID (that's 800.433.3243).

■ www.calgrants.org

The new Cal Grant Web site, sponsored by the California Student Aid Commission, where you'll find information on all the Cal Grant awards in one convenient place.

■ www.csac.ca.gov

The California Student Aid Commission, for details on all the California state aid programs and how to apply for them. Or call toll free 888.CA.GRANT (that's 888.224.7268).

■ www.edfund.org

EDFUND, for information on low-interest federal student loans, college and financial planning, advice and strategies for borrowing and more. Or call toll free 877.2EDFUND (that's 877.233.3863).

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free money for college

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College in this workbook refers to any college, university, graduate or professional school, private career college or other educational institution beyond high school.

Basics

A Look at the Basics

While most colleges expect you and your family to contribute toward your education, financial aid can help close the gap between your resources and college costs.

The most common types of aid are grants, scholarships, work-study and loans.

GRANTS are financial aid you don't have to repay and usually are based on financial need. Pell Grants and Cal Grants are the largest sources of free money from the government.

SCHOLARSHIPS are also sources of free money and usually are not based on financial need. Instead, they may recognize your grades or test scores, athletic ability, major, special talents, heritage or community service.

WORK-STUDY and campus employment programs let you earn money for your schooling through a job on or off campus.

LOANS are borrowed dollars that must be repaid, with interest. There are federal, college and private loans for students and parents. Some loans are need-based while others are for all qualified students, regardless of their income or assets.

You'll also want to explore other options, including the AmeriCorps program, military benefits, employment opportunities and tax breaks. Another tip: Ask if your college has a tuition payment plan. A summer job, part-time work during the school year and smart budgeting can also go a long way toward helping with college expenses.

The federal and state governments, colleges, community organizations, corporations and foundations offer student aid. To get started, contact your high school counselor or college financial aid administrator or browse the Web. You'll find a list of helpful sites on pages 37 and 38. Be sure to apply early for financial aid, as most funds are limited.



Don't disqualify yourself! Everyone should apply for financial aid. If your family's income is too high, you may not receive need-based aid, but you might qualify for scholarships, employment opportunities or low-interest federal loans. Also, it's a good safety net if your financial situation suddenly changes.

Tip

Do I Qualify?

Most financial aid is awarded based on your demonstrated financial need so most of the information in this first chapter focuses on need-based aid. Your financial need is the difference between what it will cost you to attend a particular college and what you and your family can pay toward your college costs.

Start With the FAFSA—It's Free

To apply for federal and state financial aid and have your financial need calculated, you'll need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. Whether you apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov or on paper, it's free. Many colleges also use the FAFSA to award their own student aid dollars.

Other Financial Aid Forms

Often independent colleges and scholarship organizations require additional applications, such as the College Board's Financial Aid PROFILE®, to help them award their institutional dollars. Unlike the FAFSA, the PROFILE costs money to file and send to each college that requests it, although fee waivers are available. The PROFILE can be submitted on paper or online in the fall. To learn more, contact your college's financial aid office, call toll free 800.778.6888 or go to www.collegeboard.com.

Also, keep in mind that some colleges may require their own application forms for the college's academic scholarships, grants and loans.

Your Cost of Attendance

Each college has its own student budget or cost of attendance (COA), which includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, housing, food, transportation and personal expenses for the year. It may also include an allowance for the purchase or rental of a computer.

Your cost of attendance will vary depending on where you live (with your parents, on or off campus) and the college you attend. If you have children or other dependents who need care while you go to classes, your budget may also include these expenses. If you have a disability, let your college know about any additional expenses you must pay.



YOUR **efc**

If you're a dependent student, your EFC will take into account:

- your income and your parents' income
- your assets and your parents' assets
- the age of your older parent
- the number of children and other dependents in your family
- the number of children in college.

If you're an independent student, your EFC will be based on:

- your income and assets, and your spouse's, if married
- the number of children and other dependents in your family
- the number of family members in college.

What You're Expected to Contribute

Your expected family contribution, or EFC, is the number used to determine the types and amounts of aid you're eligible to receive. It's calculated by a federal formula, using the information you provide on your FAFSA. It's the amount of money you and your family can reasonably contribute toward your education each year.

Whether your college costs are high or low, your EFC will be the same for federal and state aid, but you may be eligible for different types and amounts of aid at different colleges.

Keep in mind that you'll probably not have to pay your EFC in one lump sum. Also, your calculated EFC may or may not be what you and your family end up paying. Many things will affect your bottom line. To start, each college's cost of attendance contains reasonable expenses, not actual ones. Another reason: Some colleges may choose to count the value of your home's equity, non-education IRAs and other retirement funds, prepaid tuition plans, annuities or life insurance plans, which the FAFSA ignores, when awarding their own financial aid. In addition, some colleges may be unable to meet all of your financial need simply due to limited funds, so your actual contribution could be more.

If you cannot meet your EFC, or if your financial situation takes a downturn, contact your financial aid office and be prepared to provide supporting documents. Ask if your college has a formal process to handle appeals. In some cases, the financial aid administrator may reevaluate your EFC and adjust your eligibility for financial aid. Speak up, don't be shy—it's your future!

Dependent or Independent?

Whether you're a dependent or an independent student will affect your eligibility for need-based financial aid. Your dependency status is based on your answers to certain questions on the FAFSA. If you're a dependent student, your parents' ability to contribute to your college expenses is taken into account. (If your parents are divorced or separated, read the FAFSA instructions for guidance on which parent's financial information to report.) If you're an independent student, you'll be evaluated on your own—your parents' income and assets won't be considered for most financial aid. For some private scholarships, however, you may still need to provide information on your parents' finances.

For the 2004-2005 school year, you're considered to be an independent student if at least one of these describes you:

- You were born before January 1, 1981.
- You have children who receive more than half of their support from you.
- You have dependents other than your spouse or children who live with you and who receive more than half of their support from you.
- Both your parents are deceased, or you are a ward or dependent of the court, or were one until age 18.
- You're working on a master's or doctorate degree or a graduate certificate.
- You're married as of the date you file the FAFSA.
- You're a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces or you attended a service academy and were released under a condition other than dishonorable.
- You have unusual circumstances, as documented by your college financial aid administrator.

Don't wait until you've been accepted to college to apply for financial aid. If you do, you may miss out on scholarships, grants and other free money for college.



If you have unusual circumstances, you'll need to send any additional information directly to each college's financial aid office. Contact each one first to see how and when the information is needed.

YOUR **assets**

AND FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY

For the FAFSA, you'll report only certain assets including savings, stocks, mutual funds, college savings plans, real estate investments and trusts. The FAFSA doesn't ask you for information on the equity in your home or the value of the farm you live on and run, or the value of any non-education IRAs, 401(k), Keogh and other retirement funds, prepaid tuition plans, annuities or life insurance plans. However, home equity and other assets may be counted in the financial aid calculations by independent colleges when awarding their own dollars.

Tip

To estimate your eligibility for need-based financial aid, use the calculators at www.finaid.org or www.collegeboard.com.

Tip

Costs for more than 7,000 colleges can be found on the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool. For each college you'll also find the percentage of students who received financial aid and the average award they received.



Your Student Aid Report

Within four weeks of submitting your FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report, or SAR. Each college you list on your FAFSA will also receive your SAR information. Your SAR will contain your EFC and a summary of the information you provide on the FAFSA.

Your Financial Aid Eligibility

With your EFC in hand, each college will determine your eligibility for financial aid, also known as your calculated financial need. The college's financial aid administrator will subtract your EFC from the college's cost of attendance—the difference will be your calculated financial need. You become eligible for need-based financial aid when your EFC is less than your college costs.

Your college's cost of attendance

(tuition, fees, books, supplies, housing, food, transportation, personal expenses, and possibly a computer allowance)

—Your expected family contribution

(the amount your family can contribute based on your FAFSA information)

=Your financial aid eligibility



Financial Aid Awards

After calculating your financial need, each college will put together your financial aid package and mail (or e-mail) you an award letter. Your letter will list the year's college costs and the amount that will be covered by scholarships, grants, work-study, loans or other aid and the amount you'll have to pay. The aid may be need-based or merit-based, or a combination of the two. In addition, your letter should explain the terms and conditions you must meet to receive the aid, the deadline for accepting or declining the aid, and more. Some colleges provide a financial aid acceptance form for you to sign after indicating whether you're accepting or declining each award. Keep in mind that you do not have to accept your entire student aid package. You can pick and choose the aid you want.

Your financial aid offers usually will vary from college to college. If you're considering more than one college, you may want to wait until you've heard from each one before making a decision. But don't delay so long that you miss important deadlines. Or, you may want to accept one college's award package while waiting to hear from another college. Just be sure to let the first college know if you decide to decline the aid later.

crack THE CODES

With all the financial aid acronyms, keeping them straight can be difficult. Here's a look at the major ones:

FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
EFC	expected family contribution
COA	cost of attendance
SAR	Student Aid Report
CAR	California Aid Report
PIN	personal identification number for e-signing FAFSA on the Web or making corrections
SSN	Social Security number
GPA	grade point average
GED	General Educational Development (high school equivalency) certificate
MPN	master promissory note for federal loans

Tip

Just point and click and you can search for scholarships, grants and loans, check tuition costs, calculate your EFC, pick a college, fill out applications for admission and financial aid, take a campus tour, buy textbooks, learn about careers, look up salaries, and more. Start with the Web sites listed on pages 37 and 38.

EVALUATE YOUR Financial Aid Offers CAREFULLY

Using this worksheet, do a side-by-side comparison of each college's financial aid offer to determine what it will cost you to attend.

College	_____	_____	_____
Cost of Attendance			
Tuition and fees	_____	_____	_____
Room and board*	_____	_____	_____
Books and supplies	_____	_____	_____
Transportation	_____	_____	_____
Other costs	_____	_____	_____
Total college costs	_____	_____	_____
Grants			
Federal Pell Grant	_____	_____	_____
Cal Grant	_____	_____	_____
Other grants	_____	_____	_____
Scholarships	_____	_____	_____
Total grant aid	_____	_____	_____
Work-study			
Federal work-study	_____	_____	_____
State work-study	_____	_____	_____
College work-study	_____	_____	_____
Total work-study aid	_____	_____	_____
Loans			
Federal subsidized Stafford loan	_____	_____	_____
Federal unsubsidized Stafford loan	_____	_____	_____
Federal Perkins loan	_____	_____	_____
Federal PLUS loan for parents	_____	_____	_____
College loan	_____	_____	_____
Private loan	_____	_____	_____
Total loan aid	_____	_____	_____
Total financial aid			
(Total grants +	_____	_____	_____
total work-study + total loans)			
College costs not covered by aid **			
(Total cost of attendance —	_____	_____	_____
total financial aid)			

* If room and board are not part of your housing contract, check with the college or look in the local paper for rental costs.

** Keep in mind that your EFC remains the same no matter what college you attend and may be covered by federal unsubsidized Stafford or PLUS loans or your own resources, including savings and private loans.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

When comparing offers, be sure to ask the right questions:

- What's the college's cost of attendance—does it include all of your college costs and is it realistic?
- How much aid is being offered in grants and scholarships? Are they renewable each year? Will the dollar amount increase with tuition hikes? Are there specific terms and conditions? For example, some colleges require scholarship recipients to maintain a certain GPA.
- If you're offered work-study, how many hours would you need to work each week? What is the hourly pay rate? What is the availability of jobs? Are there jobs related to your major or career goal?
- How much loan aid is offered? Are the loans subsidized or unsubsidized? What are the terms and conditions of each loan?
- How much are you and your family expected to pay in relation to your calculated EFC?
- If grants, scholarships, work-study or federal loans don't cover your total calculated financial need, can you dip further into any assets or get a part-time job, or do you need to borrow more?
- Does the college offer a tuition payment plan that allows you to pay in installments?

Get organized. Sort your paperwork into folders and keep them in one place. Start with your college catalogs and applications, a copy of your FAFSA and worksheets, and your PIN. Later add your SAR, award letters and, if you borrow, your promissory note and loan statements.



How Do I Apply?

1. Find out what's offered and what's required.

Research federal and state financial aid programs, and look into each college's aid programs. Ask about application procedures, required forms and deadlines. These may vary by college, and out-of-state colleges may also have different application processes. Be prepared to provide additional materials, such as a copy of your federal income tax returns, directly to each college.

2. Use the 2004-2005 FAFSA.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid asks for information about your family's finances (and yours) from your federal tax returns and has a section where you list the colleges you're considering. You don't need to wait until your parents (or you) file your 2003 tax return—you can use estimates from December pay stubs and other end-of-year records, or last year's return. The estimated numbers can be updated later. Meeting deadlines is more important than not filing the FAFSA until you have the actual amounts.

You'll find the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Complete the Pre-Application Worksheet, also at www.fafsa.ed.gov, if you prefer to fill something out in writing first. You can also use the paper FAFSA, available at your high school or college, or call 800.433.3243 to have it mailed to you. Be sure to use the 2004-2005 FAFSA if you're applying for aid for the 2004-2005 school year. Both the online and paper FAFSAs are available in English and Spanish.

The FAFSA is submitted to the federal processor, not to colleges. You complete only one FAFSA for each school year. Photocopies or faxes of the FAFSA are not accepted. Also, do not attach any supporting documents or letters of explanation to your FAFSA; they will be shredded. Instead, send any additional papers directly to each college's financial aid office.

Because funds are limited, you should file your FAFSA as soon as possible starting January 1 and no later than your earliest financial aid deadline—and definitely by March 2, the Cal Grant deadline. If you file before January 1, your FAFSA will be returned to you unprocessed and you'll need to file again.

You can check on the status of your FAFSA using your personal identification number, or PIN, at www.fafsa.ed.gov, even if you submitted a paper FAFSA. If you don't have a PIN or access to the Internet, call 800.433.3243.

Along with the FAFSA, some colleges may require additional applications, so be sure to check with each college's financial aid office.

3. Meet all deadlines.

You have a lot of deadlines to monitor when you apply for financial aid. Keep in mind that deadlines for college admission and those for financial aid are usually different. Be sure to meet the *earliest* deadline for all the colleges you're considering—some may be early in January. Also, ask whether the deadline is the *postmarked* date or the *received* date.

For Cal Grants A, B and C, you must submit the FAFSA by March 2. You'll also need to submit a verified GPA to the California Student Aid Commission by March 2. It's your responsibility to find out if your school will submit your verified GPA for you electronically or whether you must submit your GPA using the paper GPA Verification Form. If you'll be submitting your verified GPA, your school must certify it first, so don't wait until the last minute.

If you'll attend in a California Community College in the fall, you may have a second deadline of September 2 to apply for a Cal Grant Competitive award, but keep in mind that there is a limited number of awards for those who apply by the second deadline. It's to your advantage to meet the earlier March 2 deadline, if you can.

For Cal Grant T, you must have a calculated EFC by the June 1 deadline so be sure to submit your FAFSA early. You also must submit the Cal Grant T GPA Verification Form by June 1.

All Cal Grant deadlines are postmark deadlines. If you'll be mailing your FAFSA and GPA Verification Form, be sure to get a Certificate of Mailing (just 90 cents, in addition to postage, at the post office) for each one as proof you met the deadline. Using a special mailing service could delay processing.

Each college sets its own deadlines for the federal financial aid programs it administers, including Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Federal Work-Study and Federal Perkins Loan. These deadlines are early in the year and are often called "priority" deadlines, meaning that if you file your FAFSA on time, you'll receive priority when financial aid awards are made. Be sure to contact each college directly for its deadlines.

4. Review your Student Aid Report.

File the FAFSA online, provide an e-mail address and you could receive an electronic SAR within 72 hours. If you file online (or on paper and provide an e-mail address), you'll receive e-mail instructions for accessing your SAR on the Web. Otherwise, you should receive your paper SAR by mail within two weeks of filing your FAFSA online or within four weeks of mailing your paper FAFSA.

The SAR contains a summary of the information you provided on the FAFSA and lists your expected family contribution—the number used to determine your eligibility for federal and state aid. Look for this number next to the "EFC"—there won't be a dollar sign. If there are any numbers after the EFC, even zeros, then your EFC was calculated. (If your EFC is zero, then no family contribution is expected.) If there are no numbers, your SAR is incomplete and must be corrected before an EFC will be calculated.

deadlines

Cal Grant

Immediately review your SAR for accuracy and follow the instructions if you must make corrections. Using your PIN, you can view your SAR and make changes online at www.fafsa.ed.gov, even if you filed a paper FAFSA. Be sure to return your corrected SAR immediately and keep a copy for your records.

Each college you list on your FAFSA will receive your SAR information. The California Student Aid Commission will also receive it to evaluate your eligibility for a Cal Grant and other California state aid, as long as you list at least one qualifying California college or indicate you're a California resident.

If you don't receive your SAR within four weeks or if you need another copy, go to www.fafsa.ed.gov or call 800.433.3243.

5. Research private scholarships.

Check the requirements and deadlines for private scholarships and grants at each school when applying. Also, browse the scholarship directories on the Web or in your library. Don't overlook scholarships offered by organizations in your local community. Generally, private scholarships are not based on financial need. You may need to write letters and essays or be interviewed as part of the application process, so start your research early.

Private organizations will notify you directly of an award, its requirements and how you'll receive the funds. Keep in mind that colleges must apply any outside scholarships toward your unmet need or reduce other aid—usually outside scholarships will not replace your EFC. Be sure to let your college know about any private awards as soon as you receive them. You can apply for private scholarships and grants throughout your college years.

6. Look into federal loans.

Federal student loans offer low interest rates and flexible repayment plans. To apply, you must file the FAFSA. The FAFSA will establish your eligibility for both a subsidized and an unsubsidized federal Stafford loan and a federal Perkins loan. Your college will tell you if you qualify. Requirements vary for the different loans and participation in the loan programs may vary from one college to the next. To learn more about federal loans for students and parents, see pages 16-22 or go to www.studentaid.ed.gov or www.edfund.org.

7. Evaluate all offers.

Carefully read all letters you may receive from the federal processor, colleges, the California Student Aid Commission, EdFund and private scholarship organizations. College admissions letters and financial aid eligibility letters usually aren't mailed at the same time, so you'll probably learn about your financial aid offer after being accepted to a college. Be sure to respond promptly if you're asked for more information.

CAL GRANTS A, B, C DEADLINE ■ MARCH 2

Apply no later than March 2. Along with submitting the FAFSA, you must submit a verified GPA. Be sure to check with your school to confirm whether your GPA will be submitted electronically by the school or on the paper GPA Verification Form by you.

CAL GRANT A AND B TRANSFER ENTITLEMENT AWARD DEADLINE ■ MARCH 2

If you graduated from high school after June 30, 2000, are attending a California Community College and plan to transfer to a four-year college in the fall, be sure to apply by March 2 for a Cal Grant A or B Transfer Entitlement award if you qualify.

MISSED THE MARCH 2 DEADLINE?

Even if you missed the March 2 deadline, you still can apply for a federal Pell Grant and federal student loans. Some college-based aid and private scholarships and loans also may be available.

SECOND DEADLINE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS ■ SEPTEMBER 2

If you'll be attending a California Community College in the fall and miss the March 2 deadline, you have until September 2 to apply for a Cal Grant A or B Competitive award.

8. Reapply each year.

You must reapply each year to continue receiving federal and state financial aid. Although Cal Grant awards are automatically renewed if you continue to have financial aid eligibility, most other awards are considered "new" each year.

To reapply, add any new information to your Renewal FAFSA which you'll find at www.fafsa.ed.gov starting January 1. If you don't have a PIN, you may receive your paper Renewal FAFSA in January at your home address. If you don't have a Renewal FAFSA, you'll need to complete a new FAFSA, either online or on paper.

Your Renewal FAFSA carries forward most of the demographic information you provided the prior year. You need to update information that has changed, such as your income or family size, and complete any blank areas. Be sure to review the colleges you listed. Contact your college's financial aid office if you need assistance.

If you change schools, your financial aid will not always go with you. To find out how to receive aid at your new college, contact the new college's financial aid office and be sure to meet its deadlines.



16 Tips for Completing the FAFSA

1. **Get an early start.** Pick up a paper FAFSA or go to www.fafsa.ed.gov to get an idea of the questions you'll need to answer.
2. **Apply for a PIN in the fall** at www.pin.ed.gov to e-sign your FAFSA on the Web. Also, ask one of your parents to get a PIN, if you're a dependent student.
3. **Gather these materials ahead of time:**
 - the FAFSA, if filing on paper
 - the Pre-Application Worksheet at www.fafsa.ed.gov, if filing online
 - your PIN, if filing online
 - your driver's license, if you have one
 - your Social Security number and your parents' numbers. If you don't have a number, apply for one in the fall at your local post office or Social Security office. To learn more, go to www.ssa.gov or call 800.772.1213 (TTY 800.325.0778).
 - your federal income tax return or your family's, with all schedules
 - current bank statements, business, farm or investment records, records of untaxed income—welfare, Social Security, veterans or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits
 - your Alien Registration number, if you're not a U.S. citizen.
4. **Read all the instructions thoroughly.** Work through each step carefully to avoid mistakes. Careless errors can cause processing delays, which could mean missed deadlines and dollars.
5. **Spell your name as it appears on your Social Security card.** Using a nickname or other name will delay processing. (If your name has changed, you'll need to update your records with the Social Security Administration.)
6. **Be sure to indicate if either of your parents went to college for maximum consideration for the Cal Grant Competitive awards.**
7. **Write in CA if California is your state of legal residence for the residency question.** If left blank, you can't be considered for a Cal Grant or any other California student aid. Be sure to indicate the month and year you became a legal California resident.
8. **Use estimates if you haven't completed your 2003 tax return.** It's easier to fill out the FAFSA if you have a completed return, but if you don't, use estimates rather than missing a deadline. Once you file your tax return, you must correct any information. (If your actual numbers are significantly higher or lower, your EFC will change and your financial aid offers may need to be reviewed.)
9. **Be sure to provide your parents' income information if you're a dependent student (you answered no to all questions in Step Three)—otherwise your SAR will not be complete and you may be disqualified for Cal Grant and other state aid consideration.**
10. **Don't skip the drug question.** A drug conviction doesn't necessarily make you ineligible for federal aid, but colleges are not allowed to provide federal aid to students who don't answer this question. Students with convictions will receive a worksheet to determine if their conviction affects their eligibility for federal aid. Those ineligible for federal aid may still be eligible for state, college or private aid and can regain their eligibility early by completing a drug rehabilitation program or having their conviction reversed or set aside.
11. **Use only federal Title IV codes for colleges.** For Title IV codes, ask your high school counselor or college or go to www.fafsa.ed.gov. If you use any other type of school code or abbreviate the names of colleges, your FAFSA information won't be forwarded.
12. **Be sure to list at least one eligible California college to be considered for a Cal Grant.** If you're considering a California four-year college, be sure to put that school first, with any California Community College listed further down.
13. **Be sure you and at least one parent, if you're a dependent, sign the FAFSA.** Unsigned forms will not be processed.
14. **Be sure to submit your FAFSA by your earliest deadline.** Some deadlines for private or college aid may be earlier than the March 2 Cal Grant deadline.
15. **Keep a photocopy or printout of your FAFSA.** Also keep copies of all the worksheets and records you used to complete the FAFSA. Your college may ask to see them.
16. **Don't date or mail your FAFSA before January 1.** If you do, it will be returned unprocessed and you'll need to file again.

Still have questions?

For help completing the FAFSA, contact your high school counselor or college financial aid administrator. Or call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at toll free 800.433.3243, 319.337.5665 if you're calling from another country or TTY 800.730.8913 if you're hearing impaired—the staff are very helpful, there's usually not a long wait and you can call any day of the week. You'll also find help at www.fafsa.ed.gov and www.studentaid.ed.gov/complefafsa. In addition, plan to attend one of the FAFSA workshops that are held each January and February throughout the state. Workshop locations will be listed in late December at www.csac.ca.gov.

FAFSA ON THE WEB IS A



The easiest and fastest way to file the FAFSA is online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The site is available in both English and Spanish and you can apply around the clock, seven days a week.

When you use FAFSA on the Web, you'll answer only those questions that pertain to you because the online FAFSA uses skip logic. You can make on-the-spot corrections and your answers will be automatically edited with built-in prompts, resulting in substantially fewer errors. Plus, you'll find help online for each question. Another feature lets you exchange live messages with a customer service representative.

In addition, you can save your FAFSA for up to 45 days, so you don't have to complete it in one sitting. Your application will be transmitted to the federal processor within seconds, and you'll receive your Student Aid Report within two weeks or as soon as 72 hours, if you provide an e-mail address.

Here are seven smart moves for applying online:

1. Apply for your personal identification number, or PIN, in the fall at www.pin.ed.gov so you can e-sign your FAFSA. Ask one of your parents to get a PIN too, if you're a dependent student.
2. Complete the Pre-Application Worksheet at www.fafsa.ed.gov if you prefer to fill something out in writing first. It lists the FAFSA questions and provides boxes for your answers. The order of the questions follows the online FAFSA, which differs from the paper FAFSA.
3. Review your application carefully and print out a copy for your records before transmitting it.
4. Use your PIN to e-sign your FAFSA for faster processing. If you don't have a PIN, you can print, sign and mail the signature page. If you don't have a PIN or a printer, you can still use FAFSA on the Web—you'll receive a SAR without an EFC that must be signed and returned before your EFC will be calculated.
5. Avoid peak hours—you'll find faster response times at www.fafsa.ed.gov before 8 a.m. and after 8 p.m. Pacific Standard Time.
6. Provide an e-mail address and you'll receive an estimate of your EFC instantly. You'll also receive a message confirming that your FAFSA was received and a link to where you can access your SAR online. Be sure to print and keep the confirmation.
7. Check on the status of your FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov by using your PIN and selecting "Check Status of a Submitted FAFSA" under "FAFSA Follow-up."

To learn more, go to www.fafsa.ed.gov or call 800.4FED.AID.

Get Your PIN Now

You can e-sign your FAFSA using your four-digit PIN. By getting your PIN in the fall, you'll be ready to submit your FAFSA online starting January 1. To apply for a PIN, go to www.pin.ed.gov. You'll need to provide your name, Social Security number and other information. The U.S. Department of Education will send you an e-mail within three to five days with instructions on how to retrieve your PIN electronically through a secured Web site or mail it to you within seven to 10 days if you don't provide an e-mail address.

Students who file the FAFSA without a PIN and provide an e-mail address will receive a PIN by e-mail. Those who don't provide an e-mail address will receive a PIN by mail. Be sure to keep your PIN confidential and in a safe place.

Besides signing your FAFSA electronically, you can use your PIN to make corrections to your FAFSA information, review your federal student aid records online and access your Renewal FAFSA next year.

More than six colleges?

If you'd like more than six colleges to receive your FAFSA information, you'll first have to delete colleges—you can only list six colleges on your FAFSA or SAR at a time. You can make changes to your list of colleges on the Web at www.fafsa.ed.gov or by calling 800.433.3243, but you may want to wait until your first set of colleges has received your SAR. In addition, some colleges may let you provide them with a photocopy of your SAR.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

After you file your FAFSA, you should receive your:

- **Student Aid Report.** The federal processor will mail your SAR (or e-mail it if you provide an e-mail address).
- **Financial aid award letters.** The financial aid administrator at each college you list on your FAFSA will send you an evaluation of your eligibility for financial aid once you've been accepted for admission and have submitted any additional information, if requested.
- **California Aid Report.** The California Student Aid Commission will send you a letter with information on your eligibility for a Cal Grant if you filed both the FAFSA and a verified GPA by the deadline, and if you listed at least one qualifying California school on your FAFSA and are a California resident.

Each year, the federal government randomly selects a number of FAFSAs for verification. If yours is selected, colleges will ask you to verify information you provided on your application and usually will ask to see your federal tax return. Independently, your college may also ask for financial records to verify your student aid eligibility.



Tip



You may come across Web sites that offer to complete and file your FAFSA for a fee. These sites are not affiliated with or endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education. You should not pay for assistance that's provided for free at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Tip

Most California colleges require you to apply for both a Cal Grant and a Pell Grant before considering you for other federal, state and college-based student aid.



What Programs Does California Offer?

The state of California offers a number of financial aid opportunities through the California Student Aid Commission:

- Cal Grants
- Child Development Teacher Grants
- Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grants
- Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships
- Assumption Program of Loans for Education
- Graduate Assumption Program of Loans for Education
- State Work-Study

Cal Grants

Cal Grants are free money for college—Cal Grants A, B and C don't need to be repaid; Cal Grant T has a teaching service requirement.

Funding for Cal Grant A and B awards is available for up to four years for students pursuing a bachelor's degree, and may be extended an additional year for teaching credential or other mandatory five-year programs. In addition, you may apply your Cal Grant A or B award to an international program if the program is officially registered at a California campus. If you're eligible for both a Cal Grant A and B, weigh the advantages of each and talk to your college's financial aid administrator about which one to choose.

Cal Grant awards may be used only at qualifying colleges in California and you may accept only one type of Cal Grant at a time. To receive your Cal Grant benefits, you must be enrolled at least half time—at least six semester units or the equivalent. However, an exception may be made in your final term of a four-year program, if you only need a few units to graduate. Contact your financial aid office for details.

Cal Grant A

Cal Grant A assists with tuition and fees at public and independent colleges, and some private career colleges. At the University of California and the California State University, the award covers up to full systemwide fees (\$4,984 at UC, \$2,046 at CSU for 2003-2004) and provides up to \$9,708 for tuition and fees at independent colleges. Your course of study must be for at least two academic years.

If you receive a Cal Grant A but choose to attend a California Community College first, your award will be reserved for up to three years until you transfer to a four-year college, if you continue to qualify. If you list a California Community College before a four-year California college on your FAFSA, your Cal Grant A will be placed in reserve. When you transfer, be sure to let the financial aid office of the school you'll be transferring to know that you have a reserve grant.

There are three Cal Grant A awards: Entitlement, Transfer Entitlement and Competitive.

Cal Grant A Entitlement Award Every graduating high school senior who has at least a 3.0 GPA, meets the requirements and applies by March 2 or by March 2 of the following year will receive a Cal Grant A Entitlement award.

Cal Grant A Transfer Entitlement Award High school graduates who go to a California Community College and who don't already have a Cal Grant A or B may apply for a Cal Grant A award to attend a four-year college. You're guaranteed an award if you have at least a 2.4 community college GPA, meet the admissions requirements for the qualifying four-year college, meet the Cal Grant requirements, apply between January 1 and March 2 of the year you will transfer, and are under age 24 as of December 31 of the award year. (Students who received a Cal Grant within a year of graduating from high school are not eligible.) To learn more, contact your community college's transfer center staff or financial aid office.

Cal Grant A Competitive Award Other eligible students who have at least a 3.0 GPA will be considered for a Cal Grant A Competitive award. However, the number of Cal Grant Competitive awards is limited. Selection is based on a composite score that takes into consideration your family's income, GPA, time out of high school, parents' educational level and other factors, such as whether you come from a single-parent household or are a former foster youth.

Cal Grant B

Cal Grant B provides a living allowance and tuition and fee assistance at public and independent colleges and some private career colleges. The award for most first-year students is \$1,551. This award is unrestricted and may be applied toward living expenses, books, supplies and transportation as well as tuition and fees. When renewed or awarded beyond the freshman year, the grant includes a tuition and fee award for students who'll be attending a school other than a California Community College. The tuition and fee award amounts are the same as those for Cal Grant A.

For Cal Grant B, your course of study must be for at least one academic year.

Don't Miss Out!

THE CAL GRANT GUARANTEE

Every high school senior who meets the academic, financial and eligibility requirements, and applies on time, is guaranteed a Cal Grant award to attend a California college. You have four chances to apply:

1. As a high school senior
2. Within one year after graduation
3. As a California Community College transfer student, as long as you're under age 24
4. Within one year of receiving your GED

In all cases, you must meet the March 2 deadline.

There are three Cal Grant B awards: Entitlement, Transfer Entitlement and Competitive.

Cal Grant B Entitlement Award Every graduating high school senior who has at least a 2.0 GPA, meets the requirements and applies by March 2 or by March 2 of the following year will receive a Cal Grant B Entitlement award.

Cal Grant B Transfer Entitlement Award High school graduates who go to a California Community College and who don't already have a Cal Grant A or B may apply for a Cal Grant B award to attend a four-year college. You're guaranteed an award if you have at least a 2.4 community college GPA, meet the admissions requirements for the qualifying four-year college, meet the Cal Grant requirements, apply between January 1 and March 2 of the year you will transfer, and are under age 24 as of December 31 of the award year. (Students who received a Cal Grant within a year of graduating from high school are not eligible.) To learn more, see your community college's transfer center staff or financial aid office.

Cal Grant B Competitive Award Other eligible students who have at least a 2.0 GPA will be considered for a Cal Grant B Competitive award. Again, the number of Cal Grant Competitive awards is limited. Selection is based on a composite score that takes into consideration your family's income, GPA, time out of high school, parents' educational level and other factors, such as whether you come from a single-parent household or are a former foster youth.

HOW DO I APPLY?

You apply for Cal Grants A, B and C by completing and submitting the FAFSA as soon as possible starting January 1 and no later than the postmark deadline of March 2, 2004. You must also submit a verified GPA to the California Student Aid Commission by the deadline. (You can submit your verified GPA before you submit your FAFSA, beginning in October.)

High school seniors must apply for the Cal Grant A or B Entitlement award between January 1 and March 2 of their senior year or by March 2 of the year after their high school graduation. For the Cal Grant A and B Competitive awards, you may apply during your senior year in high school through your junior year of college.

If you plan to attend a California Community College in the fall, you should still try to meet the March 2 deadline, even though you have a second deadline of September 2. That's because there are only a limited number of Competitive Cal Grant awards available in the fall.

For the Cal Grant A and B Transfer Entitlement awards, you must file the FAFSA and a verified community college GPA between January 1 and March 2 of the year in which you plan to transfer to a four-year college.

For Cal Grant T, you must have a calculated EFC by the June 1 deadline so be sure to submit your FAFSA early. You also must submit the Cal Grant T GPA Verification Form by June 1.

All other students must apply for a Cal Grant by March 2 before the upcoming fall term.

BASIC eligibility

To be eligible for a Cal Grant, you must:

- submit the FAFSA and a verified GPA
- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen
- be a California resident
- have a Social Security number
- attend a qualifying California college
- not have already earned a bachelor's or professional degree (except for Cal Grant T and Cal Grant A and B extended awards for a teaching credential program)
- have financial need at your college
- have family income and assets below the ceilings*
- maintain satisfactory academic progress
- be in a program leading to an undergraduate degree or certificate
- be enrolled at least half time
- have registered with U.S. Selective Service, if required to do so
- not owe a refund on any state or federal grant
- not be in default on any student loan

*These ceilings can change each year.

FUNDING FOR STATE AID PROGRAMS

Funding for certain California state aid programs may be reduced or eliminated as a result of state budget shortfalls. To learn more, go to www.csac.ca.gov, or see your high school counselor or college financial aid administrator.

Students who are on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces may have their Cal Grant award deferred for up to five years. All deferment requests must be in writing.



By applying in January, you'll have time if you must correct or update your FAFSA information. If you wait until the March 2 deadline, there's no time to make corrections before your eligibility is determined for the Cal Grant A or B Competitive awards.



Tips

You may use your Cal Grant award to attend summer sessions. However, the total amount you receive over four years will remain the same and may be used up before you complete your course of study.



Got a question about Cal Grants? Go to www.calgrants.org. Questions about the other California student aid programs? Go to www.csac.ca.gov and click on the Frequently Asked Questions link. You can also call toll free 888.CA.GRANT for answers.

USE YOUR CAL GRANT WISELY

Here are two options to help you make the best use of your Cal Grant award.

Cal Grant A Reserve Grant. If you receive a Cal Grant A award but plan to attend a California Community College first, your award cannot be used to pay for fees. Instead, you can hold your award in reserve for up to three years until you transfer to a fee- or tuition-charging college. Be sure to tell your new college about your Cal Grant.

Leave of Absence. If you're not enrolled at least half time for a term, you may request a leave of absence. If you don't request a leave of absence, the Commission will consider you to be on "automatic leave" for that term. You must attend at least half time for at least one term if you're enrolled at a semester- or trimester-based institution, or at least two terms at a quarter-based institution, to be eligible to renew your award for the next year. This policy was adopted to help students retain their Cal Grant eligibility until transferring to a higher cost institution.

For the latest information on these policies, go to www.csac.ca.gov. Be sure to keep the California Student Aid Commission informed of any changes to your name, address or enrollment status.

HOW DO I RENEW MY CAL GRANT?

Your Cal Grant award will be renewed automatically if you continue to meet the basic requirements and maintain financial aid eligibility. You'll need to file the FAFSA again, but you don't need to submit another verified GPA. Renewal students will not receive a California Aid Report. The campus you'll be attending will evaluate your renewal eligibility. Be sure to list that college on your FAFSA so it will receive a copy of your SAR information. If you'll be changing schools, you'll need to notify the California Student Aid Commission using the Renewal Recipient Change Form attached to the Cal Grant renewal letter. Or, your college can notify the Commission directly.



Cal Grant C

Cal Grant C awards assist with tuition and training costs at occupational, technical or career programs. The \$576 award is for books, tools and equipment. If you're planning to attend a school other than a California Community College, you also may receive up to \$2,592 for tuition. Funding is available for up to two years, depending on the length of the program.

To qualify, you must plan to attend a course of study at a California Community College, independent college or private career college that is at least four months long. If eligible for an award, you'll receive a Cal Grant Supplement application in April, which must be completed and returned by May 15. (Be sure you qualify for the first Cal Grant C-eligible school listed on your FAFSA.) Supplements are scored based on your work experience, educational history and vocational aptitude.

Cal Grant T

Cal Grant T covers one year of tuition and fees at a teaching credential program approved by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. You must commit to teach at a low-performing public K-12 school in California for one year for each \$2,000 award you receive. If you don't complete the teaching service requirement, you must repay the portion of the award for which you didn't complete your service. The Cal Grant T program didn't receive funding for 2003-2004. For information about awards for the 2004-2005 school year, go to www.csac.ca.gov or call 888.CA.GRANT in September 2004 or see your college financial aid administrator.

Use your GED to get a Cal Grant

If you receive your GED and have financial need, you may qualify for a Cal Grant if you meet the requirements. To apply for a Cal Grant Entitlement award, complete the FAFSA and send a copy of your GED test score or certificate to the California Student Aid Commission between January 1 and March 2, within one year after getting your GED. If you received your GED more than a year ago, you may apply for a Cal Grant Competitive award by submitting the FAFSA and a copy of your GED score or certificate between January 1 and the March 2 deadline.

California Aid Report

If you file both the FAFSA and a verified GPA by March 2, you'll receive your California Aid Report, a letter from the California Student Aid Commission with information on your eligibility for a Cal Grant. If you haven't received a letter by April 30 or have questions, call 888.CA.GRANT or e-mail custsvcs@csac.ca.gov. If you'll be attending a California Community College in the fall and submit both your FAFSA and verified GPA by the September 2 deadline, you'll receive a letter from the Commission by early October.

CAL GRANT INCOME AND ASSET CEILINGS

The California Student Aid Commission uses family income and asset ceilings in the selection of Cal Grant awards. But even if your family's income and assets are above the ceilings, you should still apply for a Cal Grant. Many things can change between the time you complete your FAFSA and the start of school. The Commission is required by law to adjust these ceilings each year. The income and asset ceilings for 2004-2005 will be available beginning January 1 at www.csac.ca.gov.

CEILINGS FOR 2003-2004

	CAL GRANTS A, C, T	CAL GRANT B
Income		
Dependent students*		
Family size		
Six or more	\$77,100	\$42,400
Five	\$71,500	\$39,200
Four	\$66,700	\$35,100
Three	\$61,400	\$31,500
Two	\$60,000	\$28,000
Independent students		
Single, no dependents	\$24,500	\$24,500
Married, no other dependents	\$28,000	\$28,000
Assets**		
Dependent students*	\$51,600	\$51,600
Independent students	\$24,600	\$24,600

* These ceilings also apply to independent students with dependents other than a spouse.

** Home equity isn't considered an asset for federal or California state aid.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRANSFER OPPORTUNITIES

The California Community Colleges can prepare you for transfer to the California State University, University of California or an independent or out-of-state college. Scholarships, enrollment fee waivers, Cal Grants, federal Pell Grants, work-study, federal Stafford loans, federal Perkins loans and other financial aid can help pay for fees, books, supplies, transportation, room and board and even child care expenses while you're at a community college.

Plus, every California Community College has a transfer commitment with at least one UC and CSU campus. Many also offer guaranteed transfer to a number of independent and out-of-state colleges. Don't forget to check in with your community college's transfer center often—it's important to know the courses you need to maximize your financial aid and meet all the admissions requirements.

Here's how to make the most of the Cal Grant program if you'll be attending a California Community College:

1. Apply for a Cal Grant now. You can use your Cal Grant B or C for books and supplies or reserve your Cal Grant A for up to three years until you transfer to a four-year college.
2. Apply for a Cal Grant A or B Transfer Entitlement award by the March 2 before the fall term when you plan to transfer to a four-year college.

GPAS FOR CAL GRANTS

How they're calculated

Grade point averages used to determine Cal Grant eligibility are calculated on a 4.00 scale (to two decimal places). Failing grades for courses that have not been repeated before your verified GPA is submitted must be included. Extra weight is not added for honors or Advanced Placement classes. GPAs for admission to college are calculated differently.

For Cal Grants, the following grades are included in your GPA:

- **Current high school seniors:** All grades from your sophomore and junior years, except those for physical education, Reserve Officers Training Corps and remedial courses. Summer school grades earned following your sophomore and junior years are also counted.
- **High school graduates:** All grades from your sophomore, junior and senior years, except PE, ROTC and remedial courses.
- **Students who are not currently enrolled in high school and who have completed fewer than 24 semester units or the equivalent:** All grades from your sophomore, junior and senior years of high school, except PE, ROTC and remedial courses.
- **Students who are not currently enrolled in high school and who have taken at least 16 but fewer than 24 semester community college units or the equivalent:** You may submit your re-established community college GPA for a Cal Grant B Competitive award only.
- **Students who are not currently enrolled in high school and who have completed at least 24 college semester units or the equivalent:** All college or community college grades completed by the date your college certifies your GPA.

Test scores instead of a GPA

A test score may be submitted instead of a high school GPA if you:

- have a General Educational Development test score. If so, you must send a copy of your GED score directly to the California Student Aid Commission.
- graduated from a school that doesn't provide grades, isn't accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or another regional accrediting agency or doesn't have a course list approved by the University of California. If so, you must provide your SAT, ACT or GED score.
- were home-schooled. If so, you must submit your ACT, SAT or GED score.
- graduated from high school more than five years ago. If so, you may provide your SAT or ACT score, or use a re-established GPA. (Or, if you prefer, you may submit your high school GPA.)

All test scores must be submitted with a GPA Verification Form. Be sure to take your test early enough so that the results will be submitted by the Cal Grant March 2 postmark deadline.

IMPROVE A LOW GPA

To improve or re-establish a low high school GPA to apply for the Cal Grant B Competitive award only, you may use your community college GPA instead, if it's higher and at least 2.0. You must have completed at least 16 but fewer than 24 semester units of degree credit at a California Community College.

Remember: You must file both the FAFSA and a verified GPA for a Cal Grant by the deadline. Don't lose out because one of them isn't filed on time.



To find out if you qualify for an enrollment fee waiver at a California Community College, see page 23.

For a brochure or application form for any of the specialized programs, contact your high school counselor or go to www.csac.ca.gov, call toll free 888.CA.GRANT, or write to the California Student Aid Commission, P.O. Box 419029, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9029.



CALIFORNIA RESIDENCY

Cal Grants and other state financial aid programs are for California residents only.

If you're an unmarried student who will not be 18 by the time you file the FAFSA, your residency status is based on the residency of the parent or non-parent adult responsible for your direct care and control. To qualify, the non-parent adult must have had continuous direct care of and control over you for at least two years prior to the Cal Grant application deadline.

If you're an unmarried student under age 18, you're a legal California resident if:

- a parent has been a legal California resident for one year immediately prior to the Cal Grant application deadline; or
- you have lived for two years with a responsible non-parent adult and that adult has been a legal California resident for at least one year immediately prior to the Cal Grant application deadline.

If your parents are living overseas, you're considered California resident if you're a minor and have been living under the direct care and control of a California resident for at least two years as of the Cal Grant application deadline, or if your parents have maintained their California residency during their absence from the state.

All married students, regardless of their age, and all unmarried students 18 or older, must establish their own residency. If you'll be 18 by the time you apply for a Cal Grant, you must have lived in California for at least one year immediately before this date to be considered a California resident. You also must be in the United States legally and be able to establish U.S. residency based on your status with the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.

BASIC eligibility

To qualify for the specialized programs, you must:

- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen
- demonstrate financial need (except for the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship)
- be a California resident attending an eligible college
- have a Social Security number
- have registered with the Selective Service, if required to do so
- not owe a refund on an educational grant or be delinquent or in default on a student loan.

Specialized Programs

In addition to Cal Grants, the state of California offers a number of targeted financial aid programs.

Child Development Teacher Grants

Child Development Teacher Grants of \$1,000 or \$2,000 a year are available for students who plan to work at a licensed children's center and are pursuing a child development permit at the teacher, site supervisor or program director level at a public or independent college in California. In return for receiving a grant, you must teach full time in a licensed California children's center for one year for each year of grant assistance. Applications are available from the Commission and are due June 1. Those received after June 1 will be evaluated on a first-come, first-served basis. You must also file the FAFSA.

Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grants

Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents, or LEPD, grants are for dependents and spouses of California peace officers (highway patrol, marshals, sheriffs, police officers), certain California Department of Corrections and California Youth Authority employees, and firefighters with public entities who were killed or totally disabled in the line of duty. Grants recently ranged from \$100 to \$11,259 a year, for up to four years. If you receive a Cal Grant, your LEPD grant will match your award. Applications are available from the Commission and are accepted throughout the school year. You must also file the FAFSA.

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships

Graduating high school seniors who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and show promise of continued achievement in college may be eligible for a Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship. Recent awards were \$1,500 a year. These scholarships are merit-based and renewable for up to four years of accredited postsecondary study in the United States. Selection is based on your grades and SAT or ACT score. Applications are available at high schools beginning February 1. Each high school can nominate two students for the award. While school deadlines may vary, high schools must submit all nominations to the Commission by May 4. The FAFSA is not required for this award.

Assumption Program of Loans for Education

Through the Assumption Program of Loans for Education, or APLE, elementary or secondary teacher candidates may receive a maximum of \$19,000 in loan assumption benefits in return for teaching service. District interns and out-of-state teachers may also apply. You must be a resident of California unless you're applying as an out-of-state teacher.

To receive up to \$11,000 in loan assumption benefits, you must provide up to four years of teaching service at a designated K-12 California public school. If you teach math, science or special education at the lowest performing schools, you may receive up to an additional \$8,000 in loan assumption benefits.

Applications are available starting April 1 at colleges with approved teaching credential programs and you must be nominated by your college. Eligible district interns may apply through their school district. For more information, contact your APLE coordinator by going to www.csac.ca.gov or calling toll free 888.224.7268. All nominations are due to the Commission by June 30.

Graduate Assumption Program of Loans for Education

Loan assumption benefits for students who intend to become college-level faculty are provided through the Graduate Assumption Program of Loans for Education. Up to \$6,000 of your outstanding educational loans will be assumed in return for three years or the equivalent of full-time teaching service at one or more colleges in California. No new awards were available for the 2003-2004 school year. Go to www.csac.ca.gov or call 888.CA.GRANT for information about awards for the 2004-2005 school year.

State Work-Study

State Work-Study funds jobs either on or off campus for students at selected California colleges. Work-study offers the opportunity to explore careers while helping to defray your college costs. This program wasn't funded for 2003-2004. Go to www.csac.ca.gov or call 888.CA.GRANT for information about awards for the 2004-2005 school year.



for FUTURE TEACHERS

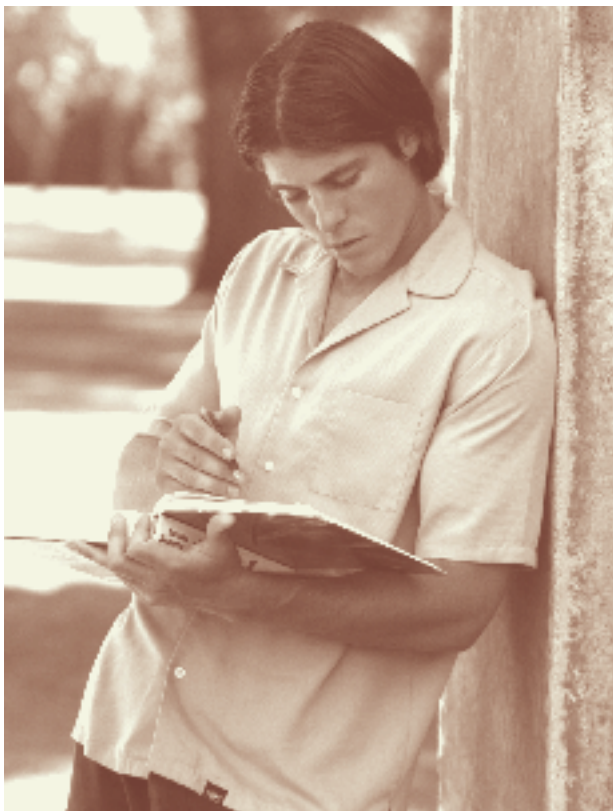
There are a number of federal and state financial aid programs available to encourage you to pursue a teaching career:

- ❑ **Cal Grant Teaching Credential Program** provides an additional year of grant assistance for Cal Grant A or B recipients who attend a teaching credential program.
- ❑ **Cal Grant T** assists with tuition and fees for students who plan to attend a teaching credential program in exchange for one year of teaching service.
- ❑ **Assumption Program of Loans for Education** assumes up to \$19,000 in student loan debt in return for four years of teaching service at a low performing public school.
- ❑ **Federal Loan Forgiveness for Teachers Program** allows federal Stafford loan borrowers to have up to \$5,000 of their loan debt forgiven in return for five consecutive years of teaching service at a designated K-12 public school. (If you have a federal Perkins loan, you may have loan debt forgiven if you teach at a designated low-income public school, in a designated subject area or to children with disabilities.)
- ❑ **District Intern programs**, under the Assumption Program of Loans for Education, provide loan assumption benefits.
- ❑ **Pell Grants** may be awarded to students with a bachelor's degree who attend a teaching credential program if their college doesn't offer a bachelor's degree in education. Students should check with their college's financial aid office to see if they qualify.

To learn more about a teaching career, teaching credential programs and financial incentives for teachers, or to locate the nearest California Teacher Recruitment Center, visit www.calteach.com or call toll free 888.225.8322.

GOVERNOR'S scholarships

The Governor's Scholars Award and the Governor's Distinguished Mathematics and Science Scholars Award recognize academic achievement. High scores on the state's Standardized Testing and Reporting, or STAR, exam earn ninth-, 10th- and 11th-graders at public high schools a \$1,000 college scholarship. If students also receive high scores on advanced placement exams in math or science, they can earn another \$2,500 scholarship. To learn more, see your high school counselor or go to www.scholarshare.com.



Not all colleges participate in all the federal student aid programs, so be sure to check with your college's financial aid office first.



THE FEDERAL LOAN PROGRAMS

The federal government runs two major loan programs for education: the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program and the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program. Both programs offer subsidized and unsubsidized Stafford loans for students and PLUS loans for parents. The main difference between the two programs is the source of loan funds:

Federal Family Education loans are made by banks, credit unions and other commercial lenders, guaranteed by guaranty agencies and backed by the federal government. Contact your financial aid administrator, or visit www.studentaid.ed.gov or www.edfund.org to learn more about Stafford and PLUS loans offered under the FFEL Program.

Federal Direct loans are made and guaranteed by the federal government as both lender and guarantor. To learn more about Direct Stafford and PLUS loans, contact your financial aid administrator, or visit www.studentaid.ed.gov or www.ed.gov/offices/DirectLoan.

The FFEL and Direct loan programs offer the same loan limits and deferment and cancellation benefits, but repayment options differ slightly. Some colleges offer both programs, but you may borrow under only one program at a time. The information provided here pertains to both FFEL and Direct Stafford and PLUS loans.

BASIC

eligibility

For federal student aid, you must:

- submit the FAFSA
- demonstrate financial need (except for the unsubsidized Stafford student loan and the PLUS loan for parents)
- have a high school diploma or its equivalent, pass an independently administered exam approved by the U.S. Department of Education or complete a high school education in a home-school setting approved by your state
- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen (for a definition, see the glossary on page 39 or the FAFSA, or contact your financial aid office)
- enroll as a regular student in an eligible degree or certificate program (correspondence or online courses must be part of a degree program) approved by the U.S. Department of Education
- have a Social Security number (except for students from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia or the Republic of Palau)
- register with the U.S. Selective Service, if required to do so
- make satisfactory academic progress
- sign a statement of educational purpose.

If you have been convicted of possessing or selling illegal drugs, you may not be eligible for federal financial aid. You can regain your eligibility early by completing a drug rehabilitation program or by having a conviction overturned or set aside. To learn more, see page 8 or call 800.433.3243.

What About Federal Financial Aid?

The federal government offers Pell Grants, Stafford loans, PLUS loans for parents, other grants and loans and work-study. The U.S. Department of Education provides most of the federal student aid, but assistance is also available from the U.S. Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and U.S. Armed Forces.

Pell Grants

Federal Pell Grants are free money for college you don't have to repay. These grants are awarded based solely on demonstrated financial need to every undergraduate student who qualifies. (You can't already have a bachelor's, master's or professional degree.) Your Pell Grant can be used for tuition, fees and living expenses, even at a California Community College. Also, you can receive a Pell Grant if you're attending college part time.

If you already have a bachelor's degree, you may receive a Pell Grant to attend a teaching credential program if your college doesn't offer a bachelor's degree in education. Check with your college's financial aid office to see if you qualify.

How do I apply?

When you file the FAFSA, you're automatically considered for a Pell Grant.

How much money can I receive?

Your EFC will determine if you qualify and the amount of your award. Your award also depends on your college's cost of attendance and whether you're attending college full time or part-time. Recent Pell Grant awards for full-time students ranged from \$400 to \$4,050 a year. You can receive only one Pell Grant a year, and cannot receive Pell Grant funds to attend more than one college at a time.



Federal Stafford Loans

Federal Stafford loans are the most common loans and are for undergraduate, graduate and professional students at all types of colleges. Like all loans, Stafford loans must be repaid, with interest.

There are two types: *subsidized* loans, for which the government pays the interest while you're in college; and *unsubsidized* loans, for which you're responsible for paying all the interest, during college and after. You may receive both types of loans at the same time. To receive funds, you must be enrolled at least half time.

Subsidized Stafford Loans

Subsidized Stafford loans are awarded based on demonstrated financial need. The federal government pays the interest while you're in college and during the six-month grace period after you graduate, leave school or drop below half-time enrollment. If you receive a deferment on your loan, the government also pays your interest costs. To qualify, you must meet all the requirements for federal student financial aid. You also must have had your eligibility for a Pell Grant determined.

Unsubsidized Stafford Loans

Unsubsidized Stafford loans are for all eligible students, regardless of their income and assets. You must meet the same requirements as those for the subsidized Stafford loan, except for demonstrating financial need. You're responsible for paying all the interest on the loan, but you can allow it to accumulate while you're in college and during the grace period. If you do, the interest will be capitalized at repayment. When interest is capitalized, it is added to the amount you borrowed and future interest will be based on the higher loan amount. It's to your advantage to pay the interest while you're in college. By doing so, you'll pay less in the long run.

Additional unsubsidized Stafford loans may be awarded to help cover any remaining unmet need or replace some of your EFC if you're an independent student.

How much can I borrow?

The amount you can borrow depends on your college's cost of attendance, your EFC, your year in school, your enrollment status, whether you're a dependent or an independent student and how much other financial aid you receive. Your loan, plus any other financial aid you receive, including private aid, cannot be more than your college costs.

What's the interest rate?

The interest rate is variable and can be adjusted each year on July 1, but it can't go higher than 8.25 percent. (From July 1, 2003, to June 30, 2004, the rate while in school, during the six-month grace period and in deferment is 2.82 percent and the rate during repayment is 3.42 percent, the lowest rates ever.)

What about other costs?

Origination and insurance fees of up to 4 percent may be deducted proportionally from each loan disbursement.



When do I begin repaying my loan?

After you graduate, leave school or enroll less than half time, you'll have a six-month grace period before your first loan payment is due. Typically, you'll have up to 10 years to repay, depending on the amount borrowed. If you'll be going on to graduate school, you may request an in-school deferment and postpone repayment until you finish graduate school or drop below half-time enrollment.

How do I get my loan funds?

Your loan funds will be sent directly to your college. If you're a first-year student and a first-time borrower, you may not receive your first loan disbursement until 30 days or more after classes begin, so you shouldn't plan on using your loan to pay expenses or fees due early in the academic year.

How do I apply?

To apply, you must file the FAFSA. You must also complete and sign a master promissory note, or MPN, and complete loan counseling the first time you borrow.

If you receive a subsidized Stafford loan and pay off your loan in full before your grace period ends, you'll pay no interest on your loan because none would have accrued. You'll have saved hundreds of dollars in interest!



HOW MUCH CAN I BORROW?

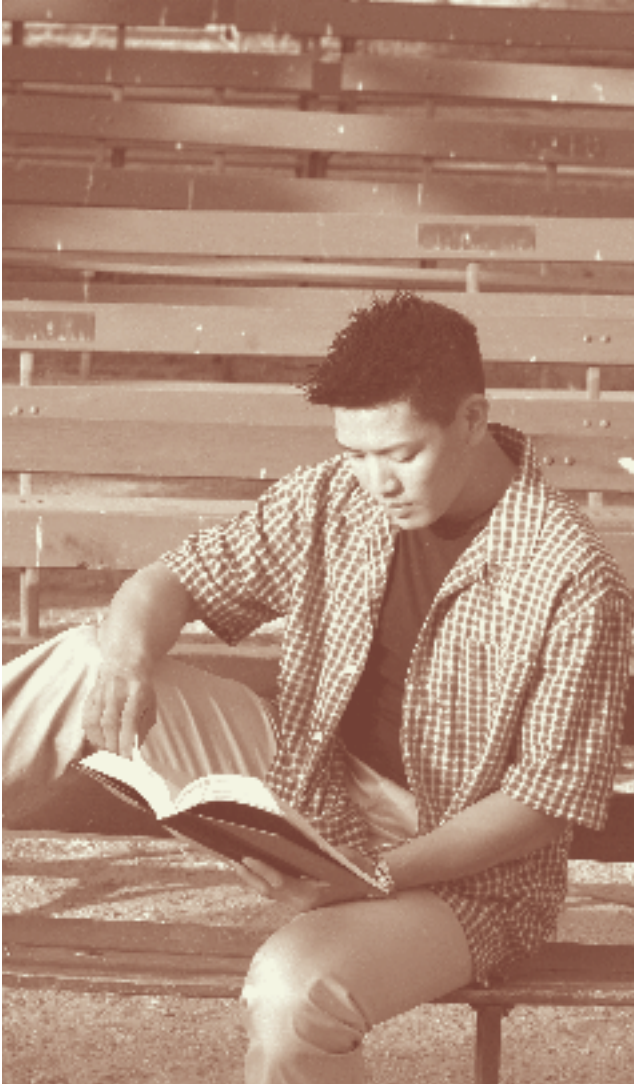
Federal Stafford Loan Limits

Academic Year	Dependent* Student Sub & Unsub	Independent Student		
		Sub & Unsub	Additional Unsubsidized	Maximum Subsidized & Unsubsidized
First Year	\$2,625	\$2,625	\$4,000	\$6,625
Second Year	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$4,000	\$7,500
Third and Remaining Years	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$5,000	\$10,500
Graduate/Professional	—	\$8,500	\$10,000	\$18,500
Aggregate Limits				
Dependent Undergraduate	\$23,000	—	—	\$23,000
Independent Undergraduate	—	\$23,000	\$23,000	\$46,000
Graduate/Professional	—	\$65,500	\$73,000	\$138,500

*Dependent students whose parents are unable to obtain a PLUS loan may borrow the same amount in unsubsidized loans as independent students.

Tip

Pay as you go. Deferring your interest payments may be attractive in the short run, but you'll pay a lot more in the long run.



WHAT IS ACCRUED INTEREST?

Let's say you borrow \$10,000 and the interest on your loan is about \$70 a month (that's at 8.25 percent). You decide not to pay the interest while you're in school for four years, but to let the interest accumulate until repayment begins. This accumulation is known as accrued interest. After four years, about \$3,400 of interest will have accrued. When you begin repayment, you'll owe \$13,400—the original \$10,000 plus all of the accrued interest. The interest you'll be charged during repayment will be based on this new higher loan amount (\$13,400). When interest is added to the amount borrowed rather than being repaid as it accrues, the process is called **capitalization**.

Federal PLUS Loans

Federal PLUS loans enable your parents or stepparents to borrow up to the total cost of your education, minus any other aid you may receive. These loans are for undergraduate study only and are not based on your family's income or assets. PLUS loans are always unsubsidized.

What's the interest rate?

The interest rate is variable and can be adjusted each year on July 1, with a cap of 9 percent. (From July 1, 2003, to June 30, 2004, the rate is 4.22 percent, the lowest ever.) Interest accrues from the date loan funds are first disbursed until the loan is repaid in full.

What about other costs?

Origination and insurance fees of up to 4 percent may be deducted from each disbursement.

When do my parents begin repaying their loan?

Repayment starts within 60 days of the loan's last disbursement, so your parents may be repaying both the loan and the interest while you're still in college. Your parents can select from a range of flexible repayment plans.

How do we qualify?

To qualify, you must be a dependent student and both you and your parents must meet the requirements for federal financial aid. Your parents must also be creditworthy. Generally, they must not have any outstanding tax liens or judgments, delinquent or defaulted loans, or extensive credit card debt, or any bankruptcy, foreclosure or wage garnishment within the past five years.

If your parents do not pass the credit check, they may still be able to receive a PLUS loan if they know someone who does pass the credit check and is willing to endorse, or co-sign, their loan. Or, you may want to contact your financial aid office to find out about other borrowing options such as additional unsubsidized Stafford loans.

In addition, you should file the FAFSA. To learn more, contact your college's financial aid office.

Tip



You'll pay no insurance fee on federal Stafford and PLUS loans guaranteed by the California Student Aid Commission and administered through EdFUND through at least September 30, 2004. You receive 1 percent savings up front.



Federal Perkins Loans

Federal Perkins loans are low-interest loans for undergraduate and graduate students with exceptional financial need. These loans are awarded by colleges, and colleges also are the lender. No interest will accrue while you're enrolled at least half time, and you must begin repaying your loan nine months after you graduate, leave school or enroll less than half time. The interest rate at repayment is fixed at 5 percent and there are no fees.

Depending on when you apply, your financial need and available funds, you can borrow up to \$4,000 for each year of undergraduate study and up to \$6,000 a year if you're a graduate or professional student. In all, you can borrow up to \$20,000 for undergraduate study and as much as \$40,000 for graduate or professional study, including any Perkins loans you borrowed for undergraduate study. However, few students receive the top award amounts because Perkins loan funds are usually very limited.

You must be enrolled in college to receive federal aid. If you withdraw, you may be required to repay your federal student aid, depending on how much of the aid you earned, based on a federal formula. For more information, contact your college's financial aid administrator and your academic adviser before you decide to leave school.



Campus-Based Federal Aid

When you file your FAFSA, you'll also be considered for three campus-based federal programs, if your college offers them: Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Federal Work-Study and Federal Perkins Loan. The federal government funds these programs each year at participating colleges. Each college decides how to award the funds and sets its own deadlines. Because funding is limited, the earlier you apply, the more likely you are to receive campus-based aid, if you're eligible.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants

Colleges award these grants of between \$100 and \$4,000 per year to undergraduate students who have exceptional financial need, with priority given to Pell Grant recipients. But unlike Pell Grants, there's no guarantee every eligible student will receive one. In addition, these funds are usually very limited, so few students receive the top award amounts.

Federal Work-Study

If you're offered Federal Work-Study, your college will help you find a part-time job on or off campus. If possible, you'll be placed in work related to your studies or career plans, or in community service. You'll earn at least the federal minimum wage.



Tip

Even if you don't graduate, can't find a job or aren't happy with your education, you still must repay your loan.



What Does It Mean to Accept a Loan?

Here are five important questions to ask before you apply for a loan or accept loan funds:

- ❑ **Is the college or program a good investment?** You have the right to be fully informed about the college's tuition and refund policies, academic and training programs, financial aid programs, faculty and facilities and graduates' success in finding a job. You also have the right to ask about how many students complete their degrees at the college and how many transfer out. Choose the college that's best for you.
- ❑ **Are there job opportunities in my chosen field?** Some jobs and careers are more stable than others or higher paying. Learn more about hundreds of jobs, including required training, prospects and earnings in the federal *Occupational Outlook Handbook* available at your library or online at www.bls.gov/oco. In addition, you'll find job trends and current salaries for hundreds of jobs at www.salary.com.
- ❑ **Are there other options?** Check out all scholarships, grants and employment opportunities first. Look into the AmeriCorps program, military and veterans benefits, cooperative education and other options.
- ❑ **Can I repay the loan?** Before applying for a loan, determine how much you can afford to repay. Estimate how much you'll need, what your monthly payments and other expenses will be and what you can expect to earn. Borrow only what you need and can pay back. To learn more, go to www.edwise.org.
- ❑ **What are my responsibilities and rights as a borrower?** When you accept a loan, you accept legal and financial responsibilities that last until the loan is repaid. You'll need to sign a promissory note, which is a contract between you and your lender. It's a promise to repay the amount you borrow and an agreement to the terms and conditions of your loan. Before signing, be sure you understand your rights and responsibilities.

When it comes to repaying your loan, be sure to:

- ❑ **Automate your payments, if possible.** Many lenders allow you to set up an automatic payment from your checking or savings account. This can help you build a good payment record. Some lenders even will discount your interest rate if you do so.
- ❑ **Simplify your loan repayment by staying with one lender.** Many lenders offer student loans and their lending policies differ. Remaining with the same lender for any additional loans may keep your payments more manageable by minimizing your paperwork and recordkeeping.
- ❑ **Keep in touch with your lender and school.** If you change your name, move, leave school or change your graduation date, you must inform your lender promptly. Always make sure your lender has your current address and phone number.

- ❑ **Interest on unsubsidized federal Stafford loans starts to accrue immediately.** You're responsible for paying all the interest that accrues. If you allow the interest to accumulate while in school and during the grace period, the unpaid interest will be capitalized at repayment. Capitalizing the interest—that is, adding the accrued interest to the original amount you borrowed at repayment—will increase the overall amount and cost of your loan. It's to your advantage to pay the interest while in school.
- ❑ **Interest on federal Perkins loans does not accrue while you're enrolled at least half time.** You must begin repaying your Perkins loan nine months after you graduate, leave school or enroll less than half time. The interest rate at repayment is 5 percent.
- ❑ **Repayment of federal Stafford loans begins six months after you graduate, enroll in school less than half time or withdraw.** This six-month grace period is to give you time to organize your finances, get a job and prepare to begin paying off your loan.
- ❑ **Repayment of federal PLUS loans begins within 60 days after the loan's last disbursement.** There is no grace period.
- ❑ **Look into loan forgiveness programs.** A portion of your federal student loan debt may be forgiven or assumed if you take on certain jobs after you graduate. To learn more, see pages 14 and 22.
- ❑ **It can cost money to borrow money.** Make sure you know the true cost of your loan. In addition to interest charges, there may be origination and guarantee fees.
- ❑ **The longer you take to pay off your loan, the more interest you'll pay.** Stretching out your payments could mean paying hundreds or even thousands of dollars more over the life of your loan.
- ❑ **Prompt and timely payments are critical.** Paying off your student loan is a great way to develop a good credit history, particularly if you're just starting a career. If you don't make your loan payments on time, you may be hit with late fees and collection costs. You can prepay your federal loans at any time without being charged a penalty or fee.



Repaying Your Loan

You have several options when it comes time to repaying your federal student loan. You can change your repayment plan at least once a year, or more frequently at your lender's discretion.

- ❑ The **standard plan** allows you to pay the same amount each month—at least \$50—with up to 10 years to repay.
- ❑ The **graduated plan** has your payments start out small and then increase over time, with up to 10 years to repay. There are two options: Under the first, your payments are interest-only for the first two years, followed by larger payments in years three through 10. The second option allows four years of interest-only payments, followed by larger payments in years five through 10. While your payments may be more manageable early on, you'll pay more over the life of the loan since a smaller portion of principal is repaid in the beginning.
- ❑ The **income-sensitive plan** bases your payments on a percentage of your gross monthly income and the amount you borrowed, but your payments must cover at least the interest due. Repayment terms vary based on the percentage you request, your income and the loan amount. Loans must still be repaid within 10 years. This plan is only available for Stafford loan borrowers under the Federal Family Education Loan Program.
- ❑ The **income-contingent plan** also bases payments on a percentage of gross monthly income and the amount borrowed, but payments can be lower than the interest that's accruing. Repayment terms vary based on the percentage requested, your income and loan amount. The loan can be repaid over 25 years. This plan is available only for Stafford loan borrowers under the Direct loan program.
- ❑ The **extended plan** is for new borrowers on or after October 7, 1998, who have more than \$30,000 in outstanding Stafford loans. The payments can be fixed or graduated, with repayment up to 25 years.

Repayment plans for private loans usually are not as flexible as federal loans.

To learn more, see your lender or go to www.edwise.org, www.edfund.org or www.studentaid.ed.gov.

Loan Combination

If your student loans are with the same lender, your monthly payments may be combined to simplify repayment. With loan combination, or serialization, your monthly payments are likely to be lower than if you were paying each loan separately and you'll receive only one monthly statement.

Here's how it works: The minimum payment on a federal Stafford loan is currently \$50. If you have a loan for \$2,625, your monthly payment will be \$50, not \$32, as it otherwise would have been. With loan combination, the lender combines the principal balances of your Stafford loans. Therefore, if you combined two loans, each for \$2,625 (\$5,250 total), your minimum monthly payment would be \$64, not \$100.

Loan Consolidation

Loan consolidation allows you to refinance two or more of your outstanding federal student loans and create a single new loan with one monthly payment. The new loan will have a fixed interest rate and new terms and may have an extended repayment period of up to 30 years. The new interest rate is the weighted average of the interest rates on the loans being consolidated, rounded up to the nearest eighth of one percentage point, but cannot exceed 8.25 percent.

The advantages and disadvantages of consolidation will differ for each borrower. Generally, your monthly payment will be less, but you may pay more interest over the longer life of the new loan. In addition, you may be giving up some of your loan benefits. To learn more, read EdFUND's booklet, *A Step-by-Step Guide to Loan Consolidation*, available online at www.edfund.org.

Deferment and Forbearance

If you fall behind in your payments, your delinquency most likely will be reported to a national credit agency, which may tarnish your credit rating and future ability to borrow. If you're having trouble repaying your loan, you may want to change your repayment plan, consolidate or combine your loans or look into a deferment or forbearance. A deferment allows you to temporarily postpone payments, but isn't available if your loan is in default. The most common reasons for deferment are returning to school half time or more, unemployment or economic hardship. During deferment, no interest accrues on subsidized Stafford loans or Perkins loans.

If you don't qualify for a deferment, your lender may offer you a forbearance, which lets you postpone or reduce your payments. You're still responsible for all the interest that accrues. Some possible reasons for forbearance are financial hardship or illness.

For more information, call your lender or EdFUND. Don't wait until it's too late!

Loan Cancellation

In unusual cases, your loan, or a portion of it, may be discharged or canceled—in other words, you won't have to pay it back. Your lender can cancel your loan if your college closes and you're unable to complete your studies, if your college falsely certified your eligibility for a loan, if your college fails to make a refund to the lender when one is due (the amount kept by the college doesn't need to be repaid) or if you become totally or permanently disabled or die. To learn more, contact your lender.

Many lenders offer incentives, usually in the form of lower interest rates, if you make your loan payments on time or take advantage of direct pay and have your payments automatically withdrawn from your bank account.



Go to www.edwise.org, key in your anticipated loan balance and let EdWise point out the repayment plan that will work best for you.

Loan Default

Defaulting on a loan is serious. When you're 270 days late making a payment (360 days for Direct loan borrowers), you're in default. Being in default means the lender has turned your loan over for collection and the entire amount is due and payable immediately. Your wages, tax refunds and state lottery winnings may be garnished to pay back the loans. In addition, you may be assessed collection charges and attorney's fees, you may be ineligible for certain state and federal jobs, you may lose your professional license and more.

Stafford Loan Forgiveness

Under the Federal Loan Forgiveness for Teachers Program, up to \$5,000 of your Stafford loan debt may be canceled if you teach for five years in a low-performing school. Only loans made on or after October 1, 1998, are eligible. You also cannot have any outstanding Stafford loans before then. California has loan assumption programs for K-12 and college-level teachers.

There's also a federal loan forgiveness program for child care providers. If you receive an associate or bachelor's degree in early childhood education and work full-time for two years in an eligible facility that serves a low-income community, you may have your student loan debt reduced or eliminated under the Federal Child Care Provider Loan Forgiveness Program. You may also qualify for a forbearance on your loan while you're working as a child care provider or a preschool teacher.

What's more, AmeriCorps awards may be used to pay off outstanding student loans.

For details, contact your lender, call 800.433.3243 or go to www.studentaid.ed.gov, www.csac.ca.gov or www.americorps.org.

Perkins Loan Forgiveness

Teach at a low-income public school, in a designated subject area or to disabled children, work at an agency serving children from low-income families, work as a nurse, medical technician, law enforcement or corrections officer or as a Head Start staff member, serve as a VISTA or Peace Corps volunteer or serve in the U.S. Armed Forces in areas of hostility or imminent danger and you may have your Perkins loan debt forgiven or qualify for a deferment. To learn more, contact your college's financial aid office or go to www.studentaid.ed.gov.



Careful! THAT'S REAL MONEY!

If you think you'll need to borrow for college, first read EdFUND's magazine-style booklet, *Zone In—Entrance*. This publication will introduce you to the real-world issues of borrowing, including the types of educational loans, definitions of loan terms, loan repayment charts, tips on budgeting and advice on managing your loans. Ask your financial aid administrator for a copy or download it from www.edfund.org.

LOAN REPAYMENT CHART

Borrowers are better off when they borrow conservatively, budget wisely and plan ahead. Knowing the monthly payments for the amount you borrow is a great start.

INTEREST RATE TOTAL AMOUNT BORROWED	NO. OF PAYMENTS	3.42%		8.25%		9.00%	
		PAYMENT	TOTAL INTEREST	PAYMENT	TOTAL INTEREST	PAYMENT	TOTAL INTEREST
\$3,000	68	\$50	\$295	\$54	\$801	\$55	\$880
\$5,000	120	\$50	\$893	\$61	\$2,359	\$63	\$2,601
\$8,000	120	\$79	\$1,457	\$98	\$3,774	\$101	\$4,161
\$10,000	120	\$99	\$1,821	\$123	\$4,718	\$127	\$5,201
\$16,000	120	\$158	\$2,914	\$196	\$7,549	\$207	\$8,322
\$20,000	120	\$197	\$3,643	\$245	\$9,437	\$253	\$10,402
\$25,000	120	\$246	\$4,553	\$307	\$11,796	\$317	\$13,003
\$35,000	120	\$345	\$6,375	\$429	\$16,514	\$443	\$18,204
\$50,000	120	\$493	\$9,107	\$613	\$23,591	\$633	\$26,005
\$100,000	120	\$985	\$18,214	\$1,227	\$47,184	\$1,267	\$52,011
\$138,500	120	\$1,364	\$25,226	\$1,699	\$65,349	\$1,754	\$72,035

What Financial Aid Does My College Offer?

Your college's financial aid office has information on the major federal and state financial aid programs, as well as the college's own grant, scholarship, work-study and loan programs. You can also ask the financial aid administrator for:

- help completing the FAFSA and any other applications the college may require.
- an explanation of how your EFC was calculated.
- advice on scholarship opportunities.
- an explanation of the type and amount of aid you're eligible to receive.
- tips on financial planning and money management.
- reference books and Web sites with private financial aid sources.
- information on applying for a federal student loan, interest rates and repayment plans.
- advice on campus employment opportunities.
- details on the college's tuition payment plan, if it offers one.

University of California Student Aid

More University of California students receive grant funding through the University Student Aid Program than through any other single program. Undergraduate awards are distributed to financially eligible students who are unable to fully cover the costs of attending a UC campus through a combination of a parent contribution (if applicable), grants from federal or state sources and a reasonable level of student earnings and borrowing. Recently, more than 41,000 undergraduate students received UC grant support, with an average award of about \$2,900. In addition, more than 16,000 undergraduate students received UC-funded fellowships or scholarships.

State University Grant

California State University campuses offer the State University Grant, which provides need-based grant assistance to California residents. The amount of the award varies according to the priorities of each campus, but it generally covers at least a portion of the CSU systemwide fees. For the neediest students who don't have a Cal Grant, the State University Grant covers at least the full amount of the statewide fee.

Educational Opportunity Program

The Educational Opportunity Program, or EOP, at California State University and University of California campuses, provides grants and counseling and tutorial services to low-income and educationally disadvantaged undergraduate students. Counseling and tutorial services are offered through your campus EOP office, and grants are provided through your college's financial aid office. To learn more, contact your college's EOP or financial aid office.

Community College Fee Waiver

The California Community College Board of Governors' Enrollment Fee Waiver, or BOG Fee Waiver, will waive your enrollment fee, regardless of any fee increase, if you're a California resident and meet one of the following criteria:

- you're eligible for any type of need-based financial aid; or
- you receive CalWORKs/TANF, SSI or General Assistance payments or, if you're a dependent student, a parent receives this assistance; or
- your total income, or your parents' total income for 2003, if you're a dependent student, was within the following income standards:

FAMILY INCOME STANDARDS FOR 2003

Number in household (including yourself)	Total family income 2003* (adjusted gross income and/or untaxed income)
1	\$13,290 or less
2	\$17,910 or less
3	\$22,530 or less
4	\$27,150 or less

* Add \$4,620 for each additional dependent.



Tip

The Federal Student Aid Information Center has a toll-free number for the hearing-impaired at TTY 800.730.8913.

It also offers federal financial aid information in Braille, on audio CD and on the Web at www.studentaid.ed.gov/audioguide.



Extended Opportunity Programs and Services

The Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, or EOPS, through the California Community Colleges provides grants, counseling and tutorial services to low-income, educationally disadvantaged students. Contact your campus EOPS office or financial aid office to learn more.

Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education

The Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education, or CARE, on California Community College campuses provides counseling, transportation, grants and services for child care, textbooks and supplies for students who are single parents of preschoolers and receiving welfare benefits, and who participate in the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services. To find out more, contact your college's EOPS or CARE office.

CalWORKs

The CalWORKs program offered at California Community Colleges coordinates financial aid and work-study opportunities, educational and personal counseling, job placement and child care for students currently receiving CalWORKs/TANF benefits and who are in good standing with the county social services office. Some services are also available for former TANF recipients enrolled in job-skill upgrade activities. To learn more, contact your college's CalWORKs coordinator or go to your college's Web site (www.cccco.edu and click on "Find a College") or go to www.cccco.edu, select "Programs and Services" and then "CalWORKs."

Tuition Payment Plans

A number of colleges offer monthly tuition installment plans if you cannot afford lump-sum payments. Other schools offer prepaid tuition plans that protect you from tuition increases or provide discounts for paying in advance or if more than one family member attends the same college. Be sure to check with each college when applying for admission.



What Benefits Are There for Special Groups?

Veterans and their Dependents

At the federal level, the Montgomery G.I. Bill provides educational benefits for participating individuals who served on active or reserve duty or in the Selective Reserves. In addition, benefits are available through the Post-Vietnam Era Veterans Educational Assistance Program and the Veterans Work-Study and Tutorial Assistance Program under the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Educational benefits are also available to dependents if the veteran (spouse or parent) died or was totally and permanently disabled in service, or is listed as missing in action. In addition, service-disabled veterans may be eligible for vocational rehabilitation benefits. For more information, contact your college's veterans affairs office, the local office of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, call toll free 888.442.4551 or go to www.gibill.va.gov.

At the state level, children and dependents of service-connected disabled veterans or service-related deceased veterans pay no systemwide registration fee at University of California, California State University or California Community College campuses. To learn more, contact your county's veterans services office (on the Web at www.cacvso.org), your college's veterans affairs office or the California Department of Veterans Affairs at 800.952.5626 or www.cdva.ca.gov.

In addition, dependents of deceased or disabled veterans who are eligible for benefits under the California Veterans Dependents Educational Assistance Program, and dependents of deceased or disabled California National Guard members who are certified by the adjutant general's office, qualify for the California Community College Board of Governor's Enrollment Fee Waiver.

AVERAGE COLLEGE COSTS IN CALIFORNIA FOR 2003-2004

	living at home and commuting	living off campus	living on campus
California Community Colleges*	\$7,938	\$13,050	\$10,731
California State University	\$10,056	\$13,068	\$13,510
University of California	\$13,025	\$15,011	\$18,498
Independent Colleges**	\$10,674 to \$36,292	\$15,786 to \$41,404	\$11,876 to \$40,820
Private Career Colleges***	\$9,906 to \$40,114	\$15,018 to \$46,930	—

This chart shows average annual costs for single students during the 2003-2004 school year, including tuition, fees, room, board, books, supplies, transportation and personal expenses such as clothing, laundry and entertainment. Contact each college for specific costs.

* Listed costs include estimated fees. CCC fees are now \$18/unit; fee amount used is \$432 per academic year (\$18 x 12 units x 2 terms).

** Low and high figures are based on nine-month programs.

*** Low figure is 9-month course; high figure is 12-month course.

Surviving Dependents of Law Enforcement or Fire Prevention Personnel

Children of California city, county or state law enforcement or fire prevention personnel who were killed or died as a result of active duty are eligible for registration fee waivers (also known as Alan Patee Scholarships) at a University of California or California State University campus. Contact your college bursar's or registrar's office for more information. (Unless extended by the California Legislature, this program will end in January 2004.)

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who meet the academic qualifications for college should apply for admission and, if needed, financial aid. Qualified students cannot be excluded from college solely because of a disability. All public colleges, and many independent ones, provide services to students with special needs. These services may include counseling, tutoring, readers, interpreters, note takers, special parking zones or the loan of special equipment.

Your cost of attendance should include all expenses necessary to accommodate your disability. Be sure to work with your financial aid administrator when applying for admission so that he or she understands your particular circumstances.

In addition, you may be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services from the California Department of Rehabilitation if your physical or mental impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment and if you require and can benefit from services to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment. Before the department can help pay for your college costs, you must first apply for federal and state grant assistance. Your benefits will be coordinated with your financial aid package.

For more information, contact your college's disabled students office, the national or local organizations serving your particular disability, local office of the California Department of Rehabilitation or go to www.dor.ca.gov and select "Direct Services to People with Disabilities."

Foster Youth

New federal funding will provide educational and training assistance to foster youth and former foster youth. This assistance may help you complete high school or obtain your GED, or help you pay for tuition, room and board, books and fees while you attend college. In addition, many colleges offer tuition waivers and scholarships for foster youth. To learn more, talk to your Independent Living Coordinator, your college's financial aid office, go online to www.childsworld.ca.gov or call California's Foster Care Ombudsman at toll free 877.846.1602. (If you're a foster youth, an orphan or ward of the court or were a ward of the court until age 18, be sure to check yes to FAFSA question 53 to establish your independent status.)

Native Americans

Students who are members or close descendants of a federally recognized American Indian tribe or nation may be eligible for grants from the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Indian Education Programs. Many tribes and the BIA require a needs analysis from your college's financial aid office to document eligibility, so be sure to file your FAFSA early. To learn more, contact the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Indian Education Programs, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825, call 916.978.6058 or go to www.oiep.bia.edu.

Families with Dependent Children

If you're both a student and a parent, you may be eligible for cash aid and help with child care, transportation and job or training expenses through the CalWORKs program. Contact your county social services office for more information if your child's other parent is deceased or absent from the home; if you or your spouse is physically or mentally disabled, or unemployed; or if you or your spouse is working less than 100 hours a month. To learn more, go to www.dss.cahwnet.gov and click on "Finding Services."

Athletes

Student athletes considering a National Collegiate Athletic Association college may contact the NCAA for information on college recruiting rules, grade point averages and testing and registration requirements. Write to the NCAA, P.O. Box 6222, Indianapolis, IN 46206-6222, call 317.917.6222 or log on to www.ncaa.org. There's also a free brochure, "The Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete," available at www.ncaa.org or by calling 800.638.3731.

Click on www.heath.gwu.edu to read the Heath Resource Center's online publication, *Creating Options: Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities*. If you don't have Internet access, call toll free 800.544.3284 and one of the staff will print and mail you a copy.



Tip

Create a college planning log. List your colleges, along with their federal codes, across the top. Down the left side, include these headings:

- Admissions Application Deadline/Date Submitted
- FAFSA Deadline/Date Submitted
- Verified GPA for a Cal Grant/Date Submitted
- Supplemental Financial Aid Application Deadline/Date Submitted (if required)
- Merit Scholarship Application Deadline/Date Submitted
- Financial Aid Award Offer/Date Received
- Response to Offer/Date Submitted
- Contact Names and Numbers.

What About Other Options?

Private Scholarships

Many community organizations, foundations and businesses offer scholarships. Start your research with the local organizations in your community, then browse the scholarship directories on the Web or at your library and use the free search engines on the Web. Also, contact the personnel offices of companies in your area or where your parents work to see if they offer scholarships. In addition, many professional and trade associations offer scholarships. Ask your art or shop teacher, coach, band or chorus leader about schools looking for students with your talents. Leads also may be listed in magazines or on Web sites related to your interests or skills.

National Merit Scholarships

The independent, nonprofit National Merit Scholarship Corporation awards about 5,000 scholarships each year for academic and extracurricular achievements. Taking the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) in the fall of your junior year in high school will enter you in the competition. Plus, you'll get a chance to practice for the SAT exam. See your high school counselor to find out more.

AmeriCorps

Through AmeriCorps, a national community service program, you can earn educational awards of up to \$4,725 a year for up to two years for college costs or to repay federal student loans. You also may be eligible for a deferment or forbearance on your federal student loans while you're an AmeriCorps volunteer. For more information, go to www.americorps.org or <https://recruit.cns.gov>, call AmeriCorps at 800.942.2677 or write to the Corporation for National and Community Service, 1201 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20525. You also may call the California Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism at 916.323.7646 or visit www.goserv.ca.gov.

Peace Corps

At some colleges, former Peace Corps volunteers may incorporate their service into a master's degree program and may receive assistantships, scholarships or reduced tuition. To learn more, go to www.peacecorps.gov.

Working Your Way Through College

It may not be possible to earn all your own schooling costs, but a part-time, summer or holiday job can help. Check with your college's employment office as a start. On some campuses, work-study program offices help students find jobs.

The Military

Scholarships for reserve officers are available from the Army, Navy and Air Force at hundreds of colleges in exchange for serving in one of the U.S. Armed Forces after graduating. These scholarships are awarded for merit. To learn more, call 800.USA.ROTC (800.872.7682) or visit www.armyrotc.com, www.afrotc.com or www.nrotc.com.

In addition, all branches provide tuition assistance for college courses taken while on active duty. In some programs, you receive an education first in exchange for a service commitment. Federal loan repayment assistance is also available. For more information, contact your local recruiting office, or go to www.myfuture.com, www.airforce.com, www.goarmy.com, www.usmc.mil, www.uscg.mil or www.navy.mil.

You may also want to consider one of the service academies. To learn more, go to www.usma.edu (U.S. Military Academy-West Point), www.usna.edu (U.S. Naval Academy), www.usafa.edu (U.S. Air Force Academy), www.cga.edu (U.S. Coast Guard Academy) and www.usmma.edu (U.S. Merchant Marine Academy).

Finishing College Sooner

High school students can take Advanced Placement® exams to receive college credit for college-level courses and avoid repeating work. By doing so, they could save the cost of up to one year of college, although some colleges limit the number of units students can earn this way toward their degree. In addition, a number of colleges award college credit to high school students through the College-Level Examination Program, or CLEP®. See your high school counselor to learn more or visit www.collegeboard.com.

Nontraditional Students

Nontraditional students—those who didn't go to college right after high school, don't depend on their families for financial support, may not have a high school diploma or who return to college for job training—may receive academic credit for their job, volunteer or travel experiences through the College-Level Examination Program. For more information, call 800.257.9558, visit www.collegeboard.com/clep, write to CLEP, P.O. Box 6600 Princeton, NJ 08541-6600 or e-mail clep@info.collegeboard.com.

Cooperative Education

Cooperative education is a work-learn program that incorporates paid work experience with classroom studies. Cooperative Education programs don't provide financial aid, but students often earn enough to pay college expenses. For more information, contact your college's financial aid or cooperative education office, visit www.co-op.edu or www.ca-co-op.org. You may also contact the California Cooperative Education and Internship Association, University of the Pacific, 3601 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, CA 95211, telephone 209.946.2361.

Saving for College

Families now have more ways to save for their children's college education. If you have any questions about how savings may affect your eligibility for financial aid, see your tax adviser or financial aid administrator. You'll find college savings and financial aid calculators at www.collegeboard.com and www.finaid.org.

529 Plans

With state-sponsored 529 college savings plans, contributions grow tax-free until at least 2010 (when Congress must renew the rule) as long as the money is used for qualified college expenses. To learn more about California's 529 plan, the Golden State ScholarShare Trust, visit www.scholarshare.com or call toll free 877.SAV.4EDU. For links to all of the state 529 plans, go to www.collegesavings.org, the Web site for the College Savings Plan Network.

The new Independent 529 plan allows parents to lock in future tuition costs for about 200 private colleges. To learn more, go to www.independent529plan.org.

Coverdell Education Savings Account

The Coverdell Education Savings Account, formerly known as the Education IRA, lets families invest up to \$2,000 a child per year. Earnings and withdrawals are tax-free if used to pay for qualified college and K-12 school expenses. These accounts have income limits.

Shop and Save

With UPromise, Babymint and other programs, families can save for college while shopping. These programs offer rebates for purchases that can be deposited into a college savings plan. For details, go to www.upromise.com and www.babymint.com.

Federal Tax Benefits

The federal government provides a number of tax breaks for college, including credits, deductions and tax-free income. All have income limitations and other restrictions.

Hope and Lifetime Learning Tax Credits

You or your parents may be eligible for a Hope or Lifetime Learning federal tax credit that lets taxpayers write off college costs dollar for dollar when they file their taxes. The Hope credit is worth up to \$1,500 a student per year during the first two years of college. The Lifetime Learning tax credit picks up where the Hope credit leaves off, allowing a credit of up to \$2,000 for undergraduate or graduate education or training. There is no limit on the number of years the Lifetime Learning credit can be claimed.

The Hope and Lifetime Learning credits cannot be taken at the same time for the same student. The credits can be taken even if Coverdell education savings accounts are used to pay college costs as long as the credits are claimed for different college expenses. Both tax credits have income limitations.

Higher Education Deduction

If you or your parents are not eligible for the Hope or Lifetime Learning credits, you still may be able to deduct up to \$3,000 for 2003 for tuition and fees you paid for yourself or your dependent from your taxable income. This deduction has higher income limitations than those for the Hope and Lifetime Learning credits and increases to \$4,000 in tax years 2004 and 2005, then ends in 2006. You can't claim both the deduction and a tax credit for the same expenses.

Student Loan Interest Deduction

You may be able to deduct up to \$2,500 of the interest you pay on your student loans each year over the life of the loans. You may deduct interest paid on loans for your own education or for the education of your spouse or child. This deduction also has income limitations.

Private Loans

Private loans, also known as alternative loans, can help you or your parents pay your college bills if you're still short after exhausting all your resources and financial aid. Private loans usually carry higher interest rates and fees than federal loans and typically are based on creditworthiness. In addition, your parents may want to consider a home equity line of credit to help pay for your schooling.

Ask your college's financial aid office for a copy of EdFUND's brochure, *Alternative Loans: Get Answers*, which provides a list of questions to ask when looking for a private loan or download it from www.edfund.org.



To learn more, read IRS publication 970, *Tax Benefits for Higher Education*, available online at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p970.pdf or by calling 800.TAX.FORM. Or read EdFUND's booklet, *Tax Benefits for Higher Education*, available online at www.edfund.org. Also, be sure to consult a good tax adviser.



What Are My Rights and Responsibilities?

Your Rights

You have the right to ask the college:

- ☐ What it costs to attend and what its refund policies are if you drop out.
- ☐ How the college determines whether you're making satisfactory academic progress and what happens if you're not.
- ☐ What financial help is available, including information on all federal, state and college financial aid programs, not just loans.
- ☐ About the deadlines for submitting applications for each financial aid program and how recipients are selected.
- ☐ How your financial need is determined, including how costs for tuition, fees, room, board, transportation, books, supplies, personal and miscellaneous expenses are considered in your cost of attendance.
- ☐ What resources (such as parental contribution, other financial aid, personal assets) are considered in the financial need calculation, and how much of your financial need, as determined by the college, is met.
- ☐ To explain the various programs in your financial aid package, and how and when you'll receive your aid.
- ☐ To reconsider your financial aid application, if you believe you've been treated unfairly.
- ☐ How much of your financial aid must be paid back, and what portion is grant or gift aid. You have the right to know what the loan interest rate is, the total amount that must be repaid, payback procedures, when repayment begins and how long you have to repay.
- ☐ How to apply for additional aid, if your financial circumstances change.
- ☐ To disclose the percentage of its students who complete the college's programs, the percentage who transfer out and its job placement rates.
- ☐ About the effect outside scholarships may have on your financial aid award.
- ☐ For its statistics on crimes committed on and off campus and for its campus safety policies and procedures.

Your Responsibilities

You have a responsibility to:

- ☐ Review and consider all information about the college's programs before enrolling.
- ☐ Compare your anticipated monthly student loan payments and other expenses to your expected take-home pay after college.
- ☐ Complete the financial aid application accurately and submit it on time to the right place. Intentional misrepresentation on an application for federal financial aid is a violation of law and a criminal offense subject to penalties.
- ☐ Talk to your high school counselor about the college you're considering. Ask current and former students and speak to local employers about the school.
- ☐ Read and keep copies of all forms and agreements you sign.
- ☐ Respond promptly and return all requested additional documentation, verification, corrections or new information to the appropriate place.
- ☐ Notify the college and lender promptly of changes in your name, permanent mailing address or enrollment status.
- ☐ Know and comply with the deadlines for applications or reapplications for aid, and understand the school's refund procedures.
- ☐ Repay your student loans, even if you don't complete your education, can't get a job or aren't happy with your education. Some lenders offer incentives if you repay your loans on time.
- ☐ File for a deferment or forbearance or change repayment plans if you're at risk of default.
- ☐ Complete entrance counseling before you receive your first loan disbursement—and exit counseling before you leave school.
- ☐ Report in writing all additional financial aid resources you receive to your college financial aid office.

Steps to Becoming Money-Wise

Like most people setting off for college, you'll need to keep a close watch on your bottom line. It's never too early to learn how to build a budget and manage your money, whether you're paying for tuition or saving for a car or first home down the road.

Here are steps you can take now to help you get a grip on your finances.

- **Get organized.** Set up separate files for your bank statements, household bills, insurance payments, college catalogs and applications, financial aid papers, loan documents and correspondence with your college. Keep all your records in a safe place.
- **Keep track.** Write down all your expenses in a notebook for two to four weeks to help you understand your spending habits and find out where your money is going.
- **Create a monthly spending plan and stick to it.** Figure out your income from all sources. Then complete the financial planning worksheet on page 30, using the information from your expense records. Prioritize your spending.
- **Be realistic.** Go back to your spending plan every few months and ask yourself: Is it working? If not, is there anything you can do without—or can you earn more?
- **Start saving.** No matter how little you may have to save, set aside something every month. Even just \$20 a week (or a month) will get you in the habit of saving and give you a cushion for a financial emergency.
- **Borrow smart.** If you need to borrow money for college, calculate how much you can afford to repay by looking at what your monthly payments and other expenses will be and what you can expect to earn after graduating. Set borrowing limits.
- **Pay as you go.** Deferring interest payments on your loan may be attractive in the short run, but you'll pay a lot more in the long run. By paying as little as \$20 each month on \$7,500 in student loans while in school, you can save up to \$4,150 over the life of the loan, depending on the interest rates.
- **Don't graduate with sticker shock.** Keep track of how much you borrow and how much you owe, including interest costs and fees. Borrow only what you need and don't underestimate the total payback of your loans.
- **Take advantage of federal tax breaks.** You may be able to deduct up to \$2,500 in student loan interest each year or take advantage of other tax benefits. See your tax adviser or go to www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p970.pdf to learn more.

- **Be thrifty.** Pack a lunch, get a roommate, shop garage sales and thrift stores, buy used textbooks when you can, take public transportation, clip coupons, take advantage of weekly food specials, rent videos instead of going out to the movies, shop around for the best phone, Internet access and car insurance rates.
- **Shop around for a checking account.** Some banks offer free checking accounts—be sure to read all the disclosures first. Also, keep close tabs on ATM fees and balance your checkbook each month.
- **Avoid using credit cards.** It's easier than you think to get a credit card and even easier to get into trouble. Be wary of low introductory rates that quickly jump into the high teens and greater. Read the fine print and look out for hidden fees. If you like the convenience credit cards offer, consider a debit card. Even if you use a debit card, read the fine print. Also, pay your balance in full each month. If you can't, try to pay more than the minimum payment.

It's Your Money!

BE SMART ABOUT IT

Turn to EdWISE, the financial planning guide at www.edwise.org, to help you take much of the guesswork out of managing your money. By plugging in projected loan amounts and estimated expenses and earnings for your future career, you can find out ahead of time how much you can afford to repay or whether you need to earn more. You also get clear, concise planning information to help you figure the most efficient way to manage your finances, along with a printout of your financial plan.

Tip

Learn how to create a budget and manage your finances by watching our "Less Is More" streaming videos. You'll also pick up tips for saving money from other students and strategies to keep borrowing at a minimum. The videos are now playing at www.edfund.org—click on "Students & Parents," then select the Online Money Management Library link under "Managing Your Loan."



FINANCIAL PLANNING WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to calculate your income and expenses.

INCOME SOURCE		estimated monthly total	estimated yearly total
Money from parents			
Money from savings			
Salary			
Work-study			
Scholarships			
Grants			
Loans			
Spouse's wages			
Other			
total income		\$	\$

EXPENSES		estimated monthly total	estimated yearly total
Tuition			
Fees			
Loan interest payments			
Books/supplies			
Rent/housing			
Gas/electricity			
Telephone			
Internet access/cable TV			
Other			
Child care			
Transportation	Auto gas/maintenance		
	Auto insurance/registration		
	Auto payment		
	Public transportation		
	Parking		
Food	Groceries		
	Restaurants		
	Snacks		
Clothing	Clothes		
	Laundry/dry cleaning		
Entertainment			
Credit card payments			
Medical/dental			
Miscellaneous			
total expenses		\$	\$
TOTAL INCOME minus TOTAL EXPENSES		= \$	= \$
		(available funds)	(available funds)

If your expenses are greater than your income, you'll need to look at options for reducing your expenses and/or supplementing your income. A consumer credit counselor can help. Visit www.credit.org, www.debtadvice.org or www.credit-counselors.cc.

KEEP A LOOKOUT FOR

Scams

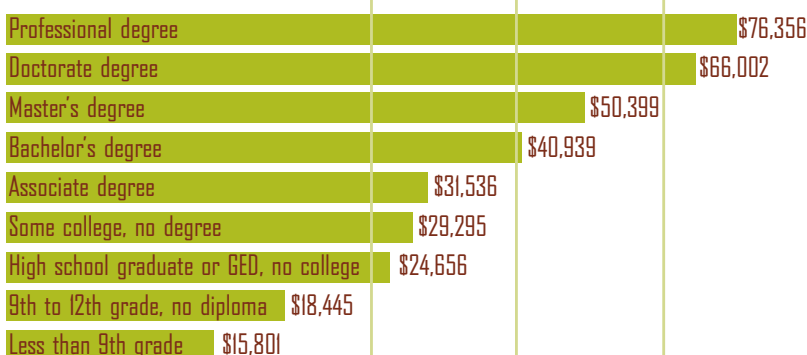
Don't be fooled into sending money to companies that make generous promises, charge you money to receive aid, try to get you to send money by claiming you're a finalist in a scholarship contest or request your credit card or bank account number to hold a scholarship for you. Reputable scholarship search companies do exist and never guarantee or promise scholarships or give you a list of bogus scholarships.

In addition, be skeptical of college financial planning "seminars" at which high-pressure tactics may be used to convince you or your parents to reorganize your assets or to pay thousands of dollars for information that's readily available for free. While there are reputable companies that put on helpful seminars, there are also those that do not and simply use the workshops as a front to deceive unsuspecting participants.

To learn more, visit www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams or read the brochure, "Looking for Student Aid," available at www.studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/lsa/index.html or by calling 800.433.3243.

EDUCATION PAYS

Education attained



Median Earnings in 2001

\$20,000

\$40,000

\$60,000

\$80,000

Note: Median earnings are for full-time workers age 25 and over
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

California Student Aid Commission

Nine-Month Student Expense Budgets 2003-2004 Academic Year

Allowance	with parents	on-campus housing	off-campus housing
Tuition and Fees	Actual institutional charges		
Books and Supplies ¹	\$1,224 per academic year		
Food ²	per month per year \$ 352/month \$3,168/year	Actual institutional charges	\$ 266/month \$2,394/year
Housing ³	per month per year Included in above		\$ 642/month \$5,778/year
Transportation ⁴	per month per year \$ 92/month \$828/year	\$ 66/month \$594/year	\$ 104/month \$ 936/year
Personal/Miscellaneous ⁵	per month per year \$ 254/month \$2,286/year	\$ 208/month \$1,872/year	\$ 254/month \$2,286/year
Child/Dependent Care	Reasonable expenses with adequate documentation provided by the student, depending upon age and number of dependants.		
Loan Fees	For student loan borrowers, actual or average loan origination and insurance fees.		
Total, excluding allowances based on actual institutional charges	per month per year \$ 834/month \$7,506/year	\$ 410/month \$3,690/year	\$1,402/month \$12,618/year

¹ Includes books (\$702), educational supplies (\$180), course material fees (\$90) and computer-related expenses (\$234), excluding the costs associated with the purchase of a personal computer.

² Includes food, snacks, meals on campus, household supplies.

³ Includes dorm charges, rent and utilities.

⁴ Includes travel to and from parents' residence and transportation costs to and from classes and work-bus fare, gasoline, tolls, parking.

⁵ Includes clothing, laundry and dry cleaning, personal care, gifts, recreation, medical costs.

Tip

Curious about your first paycheck? You'll find current pay information for more than 2,000 jobs at www.salary.com. Or go to www.bls.gov/oco for entry-level salaries for hundreds of job titles in the federal *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. At www.edwise.org, you'll also find salaries for many of these jobs.



FINANCIAL AID Checklist

**TO HELP
YOU STAY
ON TRACK
THE YEAR
BEFORE
COLLEGE**

F A L L

SEPTEMBER

- ☐ Check out federal, state and private grants and scholarships on the Web and in your library's directories, and by talking to your guidance counselor.
- ☐ Ask about scholarships offered by local community service organizations.
- ☐ Research military and veterans education benefits.
- ☐ Look into the AmeriCorps program, which allows you to earn educational awards in return for community service.
- ☐ Learn about low-interest federal student loans, if you think you'll need to borrow.
- ☐ Talk to your high school counselor about your college plans and financial aid needs. Check out www.mapping-your-future.org, www.collegeispossible.org and www.yesican.gov.
- ☐ Apply for a Social Security number, if you don't already have one, by going to www.ssa.gov or calling 800.772.1213 (TTY 800.325.0778). You must have a Social Security number to apply for federal and state aid.
- ☐ Sign up to take the SAT, ACT or other college entrance exam. You should take these exams at least six weeks before your earliest deadline.
- ☐ Request college catalogs and admissions packets, and meet with college representatives visiting your high school. Ask colleges about their own student aid programs.
- ☐ Check out colleges on the Web, take virtual tours or read their catalogs. If you can, schedule a personal visit to your top campuses.
- ☐ Keep a calendar of important deadlines for college admission and financial aid.
- ☐ Look into Advanced Placement exams for college credit.
- ☐ If you're a male 18 to 25 years of age, you must register with the U.S. Selective Service to be eligible for federal and state student aid. You can register at your high school, when you complete your FAFSA, at the post office or online at www.sss.gov.
- ☐ Register for the College Board's CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE application, if you're applying to an independent college that requires one.

OCTOBER

- ☐ Apply for a PIN at www.pin.ed.gov so you can e-sign the online FAFSA. Ask a parent to get a PIN too, if you're a dependent student.
- ☐ Talk to your high school counselor about the verified GPA required for Cal Grants to see if your school will file a verified GPA for you electronically or if you need to mail in the paper GPA Verification Form. Verified GPAs may be submitted starting in October.
- ☐ Get started filling out forms and writing essays for admissions applications and scholarship competitions.
- ☐ Attend your high school's college fair and financial aid workshop.
- ☐ Visit your top college choices, if possible.
- ☐ Keep up your grades.

NOVEMBER

- ☐ Pick up the 2004-2005 FAFSA at your high school or college or go to www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- ☐ Request any supplemental financial aid forms that your college may require.
- ☐ Ask your teachers, counselors, employers, friends and family for letters of recommendation for your admissions or financial aid applications.
- ☐ Submit your college admissions applications.

DECEMBER

- ☐ Check your mailbox or e-mail for college admissions letters and financial aid offers if you applied early decision or early action.
- ☐ Continue to apply for scholarships. Many have early deadlines.

W I N T E R

JANUARY

- ☐ File the FAFSA as soon as possible starting January 1, but not before. The easiest and fastest way is online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Use estimates if you or your parents haven't completed your federal tax returns.
- ☐ Be sure to meet all deadlines. Some may be earlier than the March 2 Cal Grant deadline.
- ☐ Keep a photocopy or printout of everything you submit.
- ☐ Get a Certificate of Mailing from the post office for both the FAFSA and GPA Verification Form, if you'll be mailing them, to verify you met the deadlines.
- ☐ Remind your parents to complete their tax returns, if they haven't done so already. That way, you'll have their final financial records when you receive your SAR and can correct information, if necessary.

S P R I N G

FEBRUARY/MARCH

- ☐ Apply for a Cal Grant by submitting the FAFSA and a verified GPA no later than the March 2 deadline.
- ☐ Attend a FAFSA workshop, held throughout the state. Go to www.csac.ca.gov for the dates and locations nearest you.
- ☐ Continue to apply for scholarships.
- ☐ Watch your mailbox or e-mail for admissions letters and financial aid award letters. Admissions letters may arrive first.
- ☐ Review your SAR, which you should receive within four weeks of filing your FAFSA or much sooner if you filed the FAFSA online. Follow the instructions if you need to correct or update any information.
- ☐ Respond promptly to requests for additional information from your college or private scholarship organizations. If you receive a California Aid Report or a corrections letter from the California Student Aid Commission, be sure to review it and respond, if necessary.

APRIL

- ☐ Evaluate all financial aid offers carefully.
- ☐ Consider grants, scholarships and other aid you don't have to repay before accepting a student loan. Accepting a loan means accepting the responsibility of repaying it.
- ☐ Decide on a college and send in all forms or deposits by the deadline (May 1 for most colleges).
- ☐ Sign and return your college's financial aid award letter, noting the awards you're accepting and the ones you're declining.
- ☐ Notify the colleges you won't be attending.

MAY

- ☐ Arrange to have the transcript of your final grades sent to your college.
- ☐ Look for a summer job to help with college costs. Or sign up for summer school or an internship.

S U M M E R

- ☐ Report any additional scholarships or resources you receive to your college's financial aid administrator.
- ☐ Prepare a financial plan. Start with the financial planning worksheet on page 30 or go to www.edwise.org.
- ☐ Arrange for college housing and transportation.
- ☐ Plan to attend college orientation.
- ☐ Complete your student loan promissory note, if you'll be borrowing for college. Give yourself some credit—borrow only what you need.



MAJOR FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

AT A GLANCE

	program	who can apply	annual awards up to...	filing deadline	forms required
GRANTS Need-based financial aid that doesn't have to be repaid	Federal Pell Grant	undergraduates	\$4,050	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA
	Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant	undergraduates	\$4,000	contact your financial aid office	FAFSA
	Cal Grant A Entitlement and Competitive Awards	undergraduates	\$9,708	March 2 ■	FAFSA, verified GPA
	Cal Grant B Entitlement and Competitive Awards	undergraduates	\$11,259	March 2 ■	FAFSA, verified GPA
	Cal Grant A and B Transfer Entitlement Awards	California Community College students	\$11,259	March 2	FAFSA, verified GPA
	Cal Grant C	occupational, technical and career students	\$3,168	March 2	FAFSA, verified GPA
	Cal Grant T (has a teaching service requirement)	student enrolled in a teaching credential program	\$9,708	June 1	FAFSA, Cal Grant T GPA Verification Form
	University of California Student Aid	UC undergraduate/ graduate students	average grant award of \$2,900	contact your college financial aid office	FAFSA
	State University Grant	CSU undergraduate/ graduate students	full systemwide fees	contact your college financial aid office	FAFSA
LOANS Money you borrow that must be repaid, with interest	Federal Stafford Loan (subsidized and unsubsidized)	undergraduate/ graduate students	U - \$2,625-\$5,500 G - \$8,500	contact your college financial aid office	FAFSA and Master Promissory Note
	Additional Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan	undergraduate/ graduate students	U - \$5,000 G - \$10,000	contact your college financial aid office	FAFSA and Master Promissory Note
	Federal PLUS Loan	parents of dependent students	†	contact your college financial aid office	PLUS Loan Application and Promissory Note
	Federal Perkins Loan	undergraduate/ graduate students	U - \$4,000 G - \$6,000	contact your college financial aid office	FAFSA and Master Promissory Note
	Private Loans	students and parents	varies	contact your lender or college	Loan Application and Promissory Note
	Federal Consolidation Loan	undergraduate/ graduate students	††	contact your lender	Loan Application and Promissory Note

Note: Funding for certain California state student aid programs may be reduced or eliminated as a result of recent state budget shortfalls. To learn more, see your high school counselor, college financial administrator or go to www.csac.ca.gov.



- Community college students have a second deadline of September 2 for Cal Grant A & B Competitive awards
- Contact your financial aid office or the California Student Aid Commission
- † Loan amount limited to college costs minus financial aid
- †† Refinance outstanding federal student loans into one loan to make repayment more manageable
- * Applications available February 1 from high schools
- ** Applications available March 1 from schools with approved teaching credentialing programs

	program	who can apply	annual awards up to...	filing deadline	forms required
WORK-STUDY Money for college you earn	Federal Work-Study	undergraduate/ graduate students	contact your college financial aid office	contact your college financial aid office	FAFSA
	State Work-Study	undergraduate/ graduate students	contact your college financial aid office	contact your college financial aid office	FAFSA
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship	undergraduates	\$1,500	nominations by May 4	Application Form*
	Child Development Teacher Grant	undergraduates	\$1,000-\$2,000	June 1	FAFSA and Application Form ■■
	Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant	surviving spouses and dependents of peace officers	\$1,259	applications accepted throughout the year	FAFSA and Application Form ■■
	Alan Patee Scholarship	surviving dependents of police or firefighters	waives registration fee at UC and CSU	contact your bursar's or registrar's office	contact your bursar's or registrar's office
	Governor's Scholars Award	9, 10, 11 grade public high schoolers	\$1,000	—	must take the STAR test
	Governor's Math and Science Award	9, 10, 11 grade public high schoolers	\$2,500	—	must take the STAR test and advanced placement math and science exams
	Community College Board of Governors' Fee Waiver	California Community College students	waives registration fees	applications accepted throughout the year	FAFSA or BOGW Application
	Educational Opportunity Program	UC and CSU undergraduates	\$1,000	contact your college financial aid office	contact your financial aid office
	Extended Opportunity Programs and Services	California Community College students	\$900	contact your college financial aid office	contact your financial aid office
	Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education	California Community College students	contact your financial aid office	contact your college financial aid office	contact your financial aid office
	Assumption Program of Loans for Education	K-12 teacher candidates and out-of-state teachers	\$19,000 (for four years of service)	nominations by June 30	Application Form**
	Graduate Assumption Program of Loans for Education	graduate students planning to teach at college level	\$6,000 (for three years of service)	nominations by June 30	Application Form ■■
	Institution-based scholarships, grants, work-study, loans	undergraduate/ graduate students	contact your financial aid office	contact your college financial aid office	contact your financial aid office

Where Do I Go for More Information?

You can search for information on scholarships, grants and loans in the directories at libraries or on the Internet.

Annual Register of Grant Support: A Directory of Funding Sources. *Medford: Information Today. Annual.* Describes grant programs offered by a wide variety of organizations within broad subject categories.

A's and B's of Academic Scholarships. *Alexandria: Octameron. Annual.* Offers general information on financial assistance, prefacing the main body of thousands of major awards available at colleges nationwide. www.octameron.com

Cassidy's Ultimate Scholarship Book 2002: The Complete Guide to Private-Sector Scholarships. *Kansas City: Andrews McMeel. 2001.* Describes various types of awards and is unique in its focus on private sources of aid.

College Blue Book. Scholarships, Fellowships, Grants and Loans. *New York: Macmillan. Annual.* Contains four indexes that provide easy access to loans and scholarships by title, subject, level of education and sponsoring organization. www.galegroup.com/macmillan

The College Board's College Cost and Financial Aid Handbook 2004. *College Board Publications. 2003.* Lists college costs and typical financial aid packages for 3,000 two- and four-year colleges. Covers preparing a budget, evaluating family financial resources and applying for aid. www.collegeboard.com

The College Board's College Handbook 2004 with Real Stuff CD-ROM. *College Board Publications. 2003.* Contains comprehensive information on thousands of U.S. colleges, including housing, athletics and financial aid. www.collegeboard.com

The College Board's Scholarship Handbook 2004 with Real Stuff CD-ROM. *College Board Publications. 2003.* Lists more than 2,500 scholarship opportunities. www.collegeboard.com

Directory of Financial Aids for Women.
Financial Aid for African Americans.
Financial Aid for Asian Americans.
Financial Aid for Hispanic Americans.
Financial Aid for Native Americans.
Financial Aid for the Disabled and Their Families.
Financial Aid for Veterans, Military Personnel, and Their Dependents. *El Dorado Hills: Reference Service Press. Biennial.* Contains details on scholarships, grants, loans, awards, prizes and internships for persons identified in the title. www.rspfunding.com

Don't Miss Out: The Ambitious Student's Guide to Financial Aid 2003-2004. *Alexandria: Octameron Press. Annual.* Lists traditional funding sources, as well as more creative financing possibilities. www.octameron.com

Financial Aid for College: Understand and Plan Your Funding Options. *New York: Dorling Kindersley. 2000.* Provides a concise overview of paying for college, with insights, tools and tips for using the financial aid system to your advantage. Available in Spanish.

Get Free Cash for College: Secrets To Winning Scholarships. *Los Altos: SuperCollege. 2001.* Lists scholarships by field of study and contains strategies to help with the competitive scholarship application process. www.supercollege.com

High School Senior's Guide to Merit and Other No-Need Funding 2002-2004. *El Dorado Hills: Reference Service Press. Biennial.* Contains details of scholarships, grants, loans, awards, prices and internships for seniors. www.rspfunding.com

Meeting College Costs: What You Need to Know Before Your Child and Your Money Leave Home. *College Board Publications. 2003.* Presents a step-by-step guide to understanding the financial aid process and paying for college. www.collegeboard.com

Need a Lift? *Indianapolis: The American Legion. 2003.* Provides an introduction to financial aid, with Web resources, college profiles and hundreds of scholarships. www.emblem.legion.org (888.453.4466)

Peterson's College Money Handbook. *Princeton: Peterson's Guides. 2002.* Gives basic tuition and financial aid information through college profiles; includes student aid planning software. www.petersons.com

Peterson's Scholarships, Grants and Prizes. *Princeton: Peterson's Guides. Annual.* Lists private sources of funding arranged by career goals and by nonacademic criteria (employment, military service, ethnic background). It comes with a CD version. www.petersons.com

Scholarship Advisor 2002. *Princeton Review Series. 2001.* Lists thousands of scholarships alphabetically with indexes by category, such as field of study. Contains chapters on how to compile an application, write an essay and prepare for an interview.

Scholarship Almanac 2003. *Princeton: Peterson's Guides. 2002.* After a brief discussion of general strategies for covering college costs, presents information about funding sources outside colleges and college-channeled federal aid. www.petersons.com

Scholarships 2001: More Than \$1 Billion in Free Money for College. *New York: Kaplan Books. 2000.* Identifies funding opportunities for undergraduate study of \$1,000 on up that don't need to be repaid. Organized by discipline, with helpful indexes. Also offers application advice and sample letters. www.kaptest.com

The Winning Edge: The Student-Athlete's Guide to College Sports 2002. *Octameron Associates. 2001.* Covers useful information for all students interested in participating in college athletics. www.octameron.com

Web Sites That Click

Here is a listing of free Web sites that provide information on planning and paying for college. (This listing is for convenience only and is not an endorsement of any site.)

When using these sites, you may be asked to provide personal information, such as your name, year in school and more. Please read the privacy policy posted by each site to be aware of the site's current practices regarding privacy and information sharing. This way, you can make an informed choice about whether to share your private information.

ACT

www.act.org

Register to take the ACT or have your ACT score sent to colleges. Includes a practice test section.

American Indian Education Programs

www.oiep.bia.edu

Read about scholarships for American Indians funded by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs' Office of Indian Education Programs.

AmeriCorps

www.americorps.org

www.goserv.ca.gov

Visit these sites for information and an online application for the AmeriCorps programs.

Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities

www.aiccu.edu

Check out the online student guidebook, including admissions applications for 76 California independent colleges and universities.

Athletic Scholarships

www.ncaa.org

Learn about the National Collegiate Athletic Association, recruiting rules and more.

Cal Grants

www.calgrants.org

Presents an overview of the Cal Grant program. You'll find the basics in one short stop. See www.csac.ca.gov for detailed information.

California Colleges

www.californiacolleges.edu

Find information on planning and paying for college in California.

California Community Colleges

www.cccco.edu

Contains descriptions of all the colleges as well as programs and services.

California Postsecondary Education Commission

www.cpec.ca.gov

Check here for an overview of postsecondary education in California, along with links to the state's colleges.

California State University

www.calstate.edu

Check out all the CSU campuses, including programs and services.

California Student Aid Commission

www.csac.ca.gov

Learn more about the Cal Grant programs, other state aid and outreach activities, their requirements and how to apply for them.

California Virtual High School

www.cavhs.org

Here you'll find tools to help you prepare for the ACT and SAT, including tutorials, practice sessions and a vocabulary builder.

Career Advice

www.careerjournal.com

Stop here for free career advice, salary and hiring information, job-hunting tips and job trends.

Citizenship Information

www.immigration.gov

Check here to learn about U.S. citizenship.

College Board and SAT

www.collegeboard.com

Sign up here for the SAT or have your scores sent to colleges. You'll also find various online calculators and a practice SAT.

College Board Online Scholarship Search

http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/scholarshipSearch.jsp

Search this free database of more than 2,000 non-college sources of funding for undergraduate study.

CollegeNet Scholarship Database

www.collegenet.com/mach25

Search this site for information on more than 600,000 awards by college location and major.

College Opportunities Online

www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool

Plug in your major, interests and geographic area, and this federal government site will fetch likely matches from profiles of more than 7,000 colleges and career schools; includes fall 2003 tuition costs. You'll also find the average financial award for each school and how many students receive financial aid.

Cooperative Education

www.co-op.edu

www.ca-co-op.org

Find out more about cooperative education, a work-learn program that incorporates paid work experience with classroom studies.

Creating Options: A Resource on Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities

www.heath.gwu.edu/PDFs/2003%20FinAid%20Document.pdf

Contains information about disability-related college expenses and suggestions for incorporating these costs in college planning.

EdFUND

www.edfund.org

Click onto this site to learn more about planning for college and a career, applying for financial aid and managing your student loan.

EdWise

www.edwise.org

Turn to this online financial planning tool developed by EdFUND and UCLA to calculate how much you can afford to borrow.

Employment Trends

www.bls.gov/emp

www.calmis.ca.gov

Find out where the jobs are now and where they're projected to be tomorrow.

FAFSA on the Web

www.fafsa.ed.gov

Complete and file the FAFSA online following the easy step-by-step instructions.

FastAid Scholarship Search

www.fastaid.com

Search this database, sponsored by the Cassidy Endowment for Education, for private scholarships, both need- and merit-based. Includes general application strategies.

FastWEB

www.fastweb.com

Browse perhaps the largest and best-known database of private sources of financial aid for undergraduate through graduate study.

Federal Financial Aid

www.studentaid.ed.gov

Stop here for details on the major federal aid programs.

FinAid!® The SmartStudent Guide™ to Financial Aid

www.finaid.org

Learn more about financial aid and how to apply for it; includes advice on college life, calculators to estimate your eligibility for financial aid and information on scholarship scams.

Financial Aid for the Health Professions

www.bhpr.hrsa.gov

Browse this site for information on federal financial aid for undergraduate and graduate students in health profession studies.

Funding Your Education

www.studentaid.ed.gov/fye

Read this U.S. Department of Education publication for an overview of student aid created especially for high school juniors and younger students. In English and Spanish.

Gates Millennium Scholarshipswww.gmsp.org

Stop here to find out more about scholarships for outstanding Pell Grant-eligible African-American, Hispanic-American, American-Indian, Alaskan-Native or Asian-Pacific Islander-American students funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and administered by the United Negro College Fund.

Golden State ScholarSharewww.scholarshare.com

Find information on the state-sponsored college savings plan.

Google.comwww.google.com

Type in the word "scholarship," along with your major or career interest (include a state or college if you want to narrow your search) and browse the results. Or, go to www.google.com/options/specialsearches.html and select "University Search" for links to hundreds of colleges.

Governor's Scholarshipswww.scholarshare.com

Go here for details on the Governor's \$1,000 Scholars Award and the \$2,500 Math and Science Award.

Help Completing the FAFSAwww.fafsa.ed.govwww.studentaid.ed.gov/completefafsa

Get help here completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

Hispanic Scholarship Fundwww.hsf.net

Explore scholarship opportunities offered by the Hispanic Scholarship Fund.

Job Searchwww.studentjobs.govwww.coolworks.comwww.idealists.com

Find out about hundreds of paid and volunteer jobs in government, state and national parks or overseas for nonprofit organizations.

Mapping Your Futurewww.mapping-your-future.org

Take steps toward college and a career at this destination for middle school, high school and adult students.

Military Scholarshipswww.myfuture.comwww.afrofc.comwww.nrofc.comwww.goarmy.comwww.navy.milwww.uscg.mil

Go to these sites to learn about the financial aid offered by the Armed Forces.

National Student Loan Data Systemwww.nslds.ed.gov

Use your PIN to look up your current federal financial aid history from the government's central database.

Peace Corpswww.peacecorps.gov

Stop here to find out about how Peace Corps volunteers may incorporate their service into a master's degree program and may receive financial aid.

Personal Identification Numberswww.pin.ed.gov

Apply for a PIN to e-sign FAFSA on the Web, make corrections and more.

Peterson's College Questwww.collegequest.com

Click on "Scholarships, Test Prep and More" to access a free searchable database of scholarships of more than 1.6 million scholarships, grants and prizes.

Salarieswww.salary.com

Look up current pay information for nearly 2,000 jobs. The site also has a job search feature.

www.bls.gov/oco

Find out how much you can expect to earn in your future career in the federal government's *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, updated every two years.

Scholarship Scamswww.ftc.gov/scholarshipscamswww.studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/lsa/index.html

Learn how to avoid scholarship scams.

Social Security Numberwww.ssa.gov

Go here to apply for a Social Security number online, if you don't already have one or to find the location of the nearest office.

The Student Guide to Federal Financial Aidwww.studentaid.ed.gov/guide

Access the U.S. Department of Education's *The Student Guide*, a comprehensive resource for federal student aid programs.

Students.govwww.students.gov

Enter a one-stop portal to all the services the federal government has to offer students.

Tax Benefits for Higher Educationwww.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p970.pdfwww.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96341,00.html

Check these IRS sites to see if you qualify for a tax credit or deduction.

Think College? Me? Now?www.collegeispossible.org

Here you'll find information about choosing the right courses in high school to prepare for college.

University of Californiawww.ucop.eduwww.ucop.edu/pathways/finaid/calculator

Learn about UC campuses and estimate your EFC and eligibility for grants using UC's online calculator.

U.S. Selective Servicewww.sss.gov

Go here to register for the U.S. Selective Service, if you're required to do so.

Veterans Education Benefitswww.gibill.va.gov

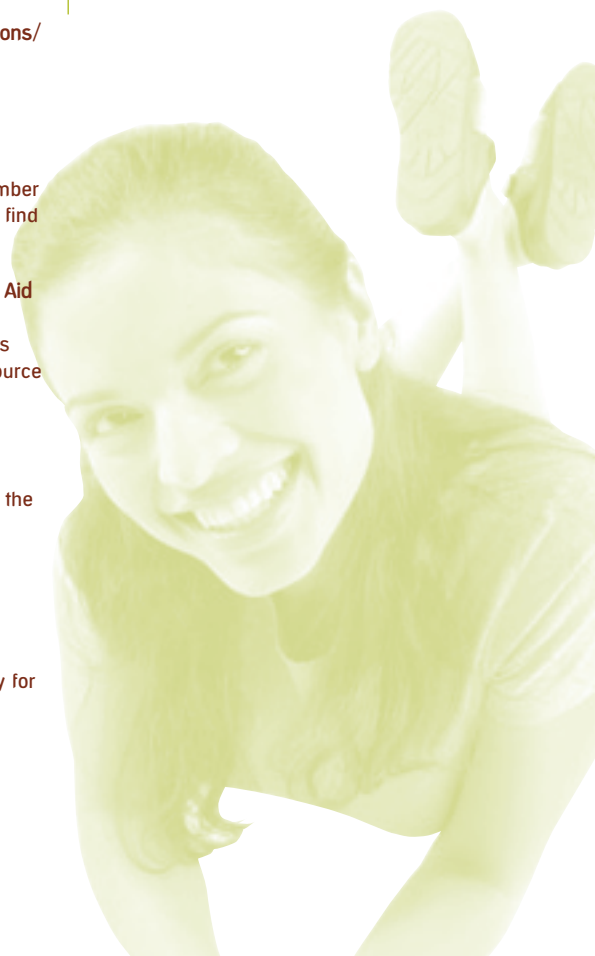
Check out the financial aid programs for veterans and their dependents.

What You Should Know about Independent Counselors, Educational Consultants and Commercial Counseling Centerswww.nacac.com/downloads/indep_couns_guide.pdf

Provides information for parents and students who are navigating the admissions process.

Yes I Canwww.yesican.govwww.yosipuedo.gov

Visit this bilingual site and you'll find tools to make college a reality.



Glossary

Assets: elements of your and your family's financial worth; includes real estate other than your primary residence, stocks, bonds, cash savings, college savings plans, but generally not a family farm, retirement or prepaid tuition assets.

Award letter: a letter notifying financial aid applicants of the types and amounts of aid offered, responsibilities and the terms and conditions of each award.

Campus-based aid: the three federal programs administered by colleges: Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and Federal Work-Study.

Capitalization: when interest is added to the principal balance of a loan rather than being paid as it accrues; any future interest is then based on the higher loan amount.

Citizen/eligible noncitizen: an eligible noncitizen is one of the following: a U.S. permanent resident who has an Alien Registration Receipt Card (I-551 or I-151), a conditional permanent resident (I-551C) or a noncitizen with a Departure record (I-94) from the U.S. Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services with one of the following designations: "Refugee," "Asylum Granted," "Indefinite Parole," "Humanitarian Parole" or "Cuban-Haitian Entrant." Other eligible noncitizens include U.S. nationals who are natives of American Samoa and Swain's Island. Those with one of the following documents are not eligible for federal or state aid: an F-1, F-2 or M-1 student visa, a J-1 or J-2 exchange visitor visa, a B-1 or B-2 visitor visa, a G series visa (pertaining to international organizations), an H series or L series visa (allowing temporary employment in the U.S.), a "Notice of Approval to Apply for Permanent Residence" (I-171 or I-464) or an I-94 stamped "Temporary Protected Status."

Cost of attendance: the total cost of college for the school year, also called student budget; includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, transportation, food, housing, personal expenses, and sometimes the rental or purchase of a computer.

Default: failure to make loan payments or otherwise honor a loan's terms; reported to credit bureaus and can influence future credit and ability to receive financial aid.

Deferment: a postponement of up to three years in repaying a loan; not for loans in default.

Dependent student: a student under 24 years old who doesn't qualify as an independent student by federal guidelines and whose parental income and asset information is used in calculating his or her expected family contribution.

Direct loans: loans (subsidized and unsubsidized Stafford loans, PLUS loans and Consolidation loans) offered under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program, where the federal government acts as the lender and guarantor.

Expected family contribution (EFC): the portion of your and your family's financial resources that should be available to help pay educational costs, based on a federal formula.

FAFSA on the Web: the electronic FAFSA on the Internet that allows you to complete and file the application online.

Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program: consists of the federal Stafford (subsidized and unsubsidized), PLUS and Consolidation loans. These loans are made by commercial lenders.

Federal needs analysis methodology: the formula the federal government uses to determine if you're eligible to receive need-based aid and how much; also used by states and many colleges. Does not count home equity and certain other assets.

Federal processor: the federal government's computer system that analyzes the information on your FAFSA, calculates how much you and your family could pay toward college and sends out the Student Aid Report; also called central processing service.

Financial aid eligibility: the difference between your expected family contribution and the college's cost of attendance; also known as your financial need.

Financial aid package: the total amount of financial aid, usually a combination of grants, loans and employment opportunities.

Forbearance: when a lender allows the borrower to temporarily postpone repaying the principal, but interest continues to accrue, even on subsidized loans; not for loans in default.

GED certificate: General Educational Development score used to measure academic achievement to the high school graduate level.

GPA: the average of a student's grades, generally where grades have been converted to a 4.00 scale.

Grace period: the short time period after graduation during which the borrower isn't required to begin repaying his or her loan; six months for Stafford loans, nine months for Perkins loans. There is no grace period for PLUS loans.

Grant: financial aid that does not need to be repaid; usually based on financial need.

Guarantee: a promise to pay a debt if the borrower fails; the government or guaranty agency guarantees federal loans made by lenders.

Guaranty agency: the agency that insures loans made under the Federal Family Education Loan Program against default.

Home equity: current home value minus the amount still owed.

Independent college: a nonprofit, private college not run by a government organization.

Independent student: a student who is 24 years old or older, or who is not 24 but is an orphan; a ward of the court; a veteran; married; a graduate or professional student; has legal dependents other than a spouse; or has unusual circumstances (also see page 3 or the FAFSA).

Institution-based aid: financial assistance programs offered and controlled by the individual colleges, such as alumni scholarships and endowments from private donors.

Institutional methodology: the formula used by independent colleges to determine a student's eligibility for the college's own institutional aid; may count assets the FAFSA does not.

Interest: the fee charged to borrowers by lenders for using loan money.

Need-based: financial aid that depends on your or your family's financial situation; most government sources of financial aid are need-based.

PIN: personal identification number from the U.S. Department of Education that serves as your e-signature on the electronic FAFSA.

Private career college: an institution offering a course of study beyond high school to teach specific job or career skills; also called a vocational, technical or career school.

Promissory note: a legally binding contract between a borrower and lender listing all terms and conditions of a loan; federal loans have a master promissory note.

Satisfactory academic progress: the progress you must maintain toward a degree or certificate to receive financial aid; your school's written standard of satisfactory academic progress.

Scholarship: gift award based on grades or other achievement, major, heritage or other criteria; usually not based on financial need.

Selective Service registration: if required by law, you must register, or arrange to register, with the Selective Service to receive federal student aid; applies to males born on or after January 1, 1960, who are at least 18 years old, citizens or eligible noncitizens, and not currently on active duty in the Armed Forces.

Student Aid Report (SAR): the report summarizing the information you provide on your FAFSA.

Student budget: the total cost of attending a college; also known as the cost of attendance.

Untaxed income: all income received that's not reported to the IRS or is reported, but not taxed; may include Social Security benefits, Earned Income Credit, welfare payments, untaxed capital gains, interest on tax-free bonds, clergy and military allowances and others.

Verification: the procedure in which a college checks the information you reported on the FAFSA, usually by requesting a copy of your signed tax return or your parents' return.

Veteran: a person who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and was released under an honorable condition, or who'll be a veteran by June 30, 2004; or who attended a service academy and was released under a condition other than dishonorable (see the FAFSA).

California Student Aid Commission

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The California Student Aid Commission is the nation's second largest guaranty agency under the Federal Family Education Loan Program. Loans guaranteed by the Commission are managed by EdFUND, its nonprofit student loan services provider. The Commission and EdFUND are headquartered in Rancho Cordova, California, with regional office coverage throughout the country.

Disclaimer

This publication contains information on federal student aid programs. While the California Student Aid Commission and EdFUND have made every effort to ensure the information is accurate, the U.S. Department of Education has not reviewed this publication. For legal descriptions of state aid programs, see the California Education Code.

Credits

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September 2003

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important dates

High School Juniors

July

Start researching your financial aid options, paying close attention to the requirements and deadlines. Check out the free scholarship search engines on the Web.

March-April

Sign up to take the SAT or ACT.
The 2003-2004 test dates are:

SAT: October 11, November 1, December 6,
January 24, March 27 (SAT I only), May 1, June 5
www.collegeboard.com

ACT: October 25, December 13,
February 7, April 3, June 12
www.act.org

May

Begin to check out colleges by talking to your high school counselor, flipping through catalogs, visiting college Web sites, taking virtual tours, writing to colleges, meeting with college representatives who visit your school, making personal visits to campuses.

Ask each college about its own grant, scholarship and loan programs and whether it offers special tuition payment plans.

High School Seniors

September

Sign up for the SAT and ACT, if you haven't taken them yet or want to again. Register for the College Board's PROFILE application, if it's required by one of the independent colleges you're considering.

October

Obtain an admissions packet to the University of California and the California State University at your high school counseling office, nearby campus or online. Request admissions packets from independent colleges, private career colleges and out-of-state colleges—a number of colleges have online applications.

Apply for a PIN at www.pin.ed.gov so you can e-sign your online FAFSA. That way, filing the FAFSA in January will be much quicker.

November

Pick up the FAFSA, the form you need to apply for federal and state financial aid. You can also complete the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov starting January 1.

Check to see if your school will submit your verified GPA for you electronically or whether you must mail your verified GPA on the Cal Grant GPA Verification Form.

January

Submit your FAFSA for federal, state and college aid as soon as possible starting January 1. For Cal Grants, you'll also need to submit a verified GPA.

In addition, be sure to submit any other applications required for private or college-based financial aid.

March 2

The Cal Grant A, B and C deadline. Mail your FAFSA to the federal processor postmarked no later than March 2, or send it electronically. Also, be sure you or your school submits your verified GPA to the California Student Aid Commission by March 2. Don't wait until the last minute!

If any college on your list requires the FAFSA to be filed earlier than March 2 for its student aid programs, be sure to meet that earlier deadline.

May 15

The deadline for returning your Cal Grant C Supplement to the California Student Aid Commission.

September 2

The second deadline for Cal Grant A and B Competitive awards for students who will be enrolled in a California Community College in the fall.

Transfer Students

September -
October

Check with the college you plan to transfer to; most schools process winter or spring transfers in the fall.